

Disclaimer: Heya guys I do not own Harry Potter however when I win the lottery I will buy the rights off JK and Warner Brs.

Harry sat in front of the fire, thinking of what this war had cost him; his friends, his family, all the people that he had loved. The war was a disaster. Darkness had won and Voldemort was triumphant. Harry sat by the fire, its warmth the lone comfort he had. He pondered his last hope. It was a gamble and it risked everything and everyone he held dear. The Weasley family, apart from Ron and Ginny, had died a year after the death of Dumbledore. From there, it went downhill.

In the end, Harry, Ron, Hermione, Ginny, Luna, and Neville were all that were left to fight against Voldemort. It soon dwindled to only Harry and Ginny. They had married shortly after the deaths of the others. It was a tragic loss, Lord Voldemort had gone to their hiding place and killed them all personally.

With only the two of them left, they had decided to pursue one last desperate plan, but the plan had failed. Ginny had died only a week ago and had left Harry on his own. Perhaps most tragically, Harry had found a very rare spell book in the Potters' library just three days after the death of his wife. In it was spells that Harry was sure could have been used to help them defeat Voldemort and, perhaps, escape with their lives

It was in this book Harry noticed a spell to change the past. To put right what once went wrong. It would send Harry back in time, not as time turners did, but actually allow him to relive his life and, hopefully, correct the wrongs.

Harry had decided to go back to his eleventh birthday. Where it all had started. So this is why on Harry's twenty-first birthday he found himself in his basement reciting a ritual which would send him back in time in order to stop Voldemort, before he had toppled the Ministry of Magic, before he had caused Dumbledore's death, before his friends had died, and before Ginny had died

On Harry's 21st Birthday he decided to cast the spell. He had to recite the spell's incantation constantly for four hours before he felt the spell react. All of a sudden he felt a pull in the vicinity of his navel and he was dragged backwards in time. To a time where it was not too late to change the future. To erase what had been done and start over.

A/N Hey guys this is just a prologue. The actually chapters will hopefully be a lot lot longer then this. If not u can kick me up the arse. Anyway plz put me in your story alert list I promise this story will be really good. Also I got another story up witch I hope u would read. This one is my main story although I put the other one up first. Just review and put me in your alerts plz. And I am one of these people that will update regurly. Although with story wont be so much with the other one cause these chapters will be really long and take time to write. Anyway enough with this ramble ill shut up now R&R Yes it is change say thank you to Intromit for beta on this chapter. Read his stories there good.

Disclaimer: I do not own Harry Potter, I am only borrowing the characters. However the character Ben Silver belongs to me.

The first thing that Harry noticed was that he was not on the floor of the cabin on the rock in the middle of the storm. He was in the cupboard under the stairs. Worrying a little, he pushed himself off the poor excuse for a mattress and opened up the cupboard door, pulling off a spider from his shoulder. Spiders were constant companions inside the cupboard.

He closed the cupboard door quietly and walked down the hallway and into the living room. It was the same abnormally neat and tidy living room he had known for many unhappy years. His concern decreased; he had at least made it to near the right when, if not the right place. Harry wandered over to the mantle and examined the pictures. Dudley was everywhere: Dudley playing on his computer, Dudley riding a bicycle, Dudley playing on a merry-go-round with his father.

There was something wrong with the pictures though. With a jolt he realised that they were too high. Even at the age of eleven he had not needed to stand on his toes to see these pictures. His sense of wrongness increased.

Getting anxious he went into the kitchen, which was very clean. Aunt Petunia demanded that everything in the kitchen from the tiles to the cupboards always be immaculate, if anything was not up to her specifications then she always would make him scrub it for at least three hours straight. After three hours, she would then inspect it and usually make him clean it again until it was up to her exacting standard.

Harry stopped in the kitchen's entryway. There sat Mr. and Mrs. Dursley and their son Dudley. His aunt and Uncle did not really look any different, but Dudley was much smaller than he should have been. By Harry's guess, Dudley was no more than seven. This would make him, Harry, six.

A chill went down Harry's spine, he had gone further back in time than he originally intended to go. Nervously, he sat down and started to eat breakfast.

"You boy" spoke uncle Vernon, he hardly ever spoke to Harry using his proper name, it was always, "You boy" or "Tramp".

"You never listening to me, do you? I said, go get your hair cut." This was one of Uncle Vernon's favourite subjects; his other favourites were how scruffy Harry looked, how Harry always got in trouble at school, or how Harry always did things that annoyed his uncle so much.

"Now, today is a very important day. This day I could be promoted to start running the company." Vernon puffed out his chest. Grunnings, the company Vernon worked for, made drills. Uncle Vernon seemed to enjoy his job, but Harry thought, it had to be one of the most boring jobs in the world.

"And I will not have you mess it up. So you're going to sit in your cupboard and not make a sound. And God help you if you do," threatened Vernon.

Harry's heartbeat increased and his palms began sweating. He now remembered this day. He had been in his cupboard under the stairs when there had been an enormous crash from upstairs. He had gone out of his cupboard to investigate the noise when Uncle Vernon had emerged from the living room with a baseball bat. Seeing Harry at the base of the stairs, he had jumped to the conclusion that Harry was responsible. He had given Harry one of his worse beatings that night.

It would not happen this time, Harry decided. Of course, his magical reserves were not great at this age, but he still believed he could use the little magic available to him to hold off Uncle Vernon's attack until help arrived. Harry had decided he would call the police. When Uncle Vernon, Aunt Petunia, and Dudley went out for the day, Harry left the house as well. He went to the local police station and made an anonymous tip.

So when the loud crash came at five minutes to seven, Harry set his plan in motion and left his cupboard to see what had happened. Just as he remembered, Uncle Vernon emerged with the baseball bat.

The plan did not go how he had hoped. The police were late. Harry had only been able to fend Uncle Vernon off for five minutes and by the time the police arrived he had been beaten for almost 20

minutes. After hearing Harry's screams, they had broken down the door and had arrested both Mr. and Mrs. Dursley for neglect and Actual Bodily Harm. Harry was taken to the hospital where the doctor informed the police that Harry had probably suffered beatings like this for most of his life.

After the Dursley incident, Harry was taken to an orphanage near Ottery St. Catchpole. Where he was taken care of and well treated. And this is how he found himself six months later on a grassy hill playing with his friend, Ben.

Ben Sliver was the same age as Harry and they both lived at the orphanage. Ben was slightly taller than Harry and had yellow eyes with brown hair. He was wearing a red hooded top with black trousers too long for him and a white t-shirt underneath the hooded top.

"Look over there, that house looks weird!" Ben exclaimed. Harry looked over to where Ben was pointing. There in the distance was the Burrow, Harry's favourite house. Harry had completely forgotten that the Burrow was even near Ottery St. Catchpole. He had never associated the Burrow with the town as he had never visited the town whilst staying there. Harry's breath quickened as he realised he was probably only a mile away from where his future wife was sitting.

"The Burrow," Harry whispered to himself. It was all he could do not to become completely overwhelmed with all his feelings for his future wife. He missed her, he really missed her and knowing that he was only about a five minute walk away from her was torturing.

"And how would you know that?" Ben said.

Thinking quickly, Harry said, "Read about it in the library downtown." He had to be careful not to let anything slip. He was not meant to know anything about this town.

"Guys it's time to go," shouted the voice of Mr. Saunders. Mr. Saunders ran the orphanage Harry was staying at, Catchpole Orphanage. This was another thing Harry did not plan for. He had not expected to be literally dropped of on the Weasley's front door step.

Harry and Ben walked back to the van, climbed in, and did their seat belts up. Harry kept his eyes locked on the Burrow until it disappeared below the horizon.

"You know Harry, I hope tomorrow will bring us both good parents." Ben said after they had been travelling for five minutes in the van.

"So do I, Ben, so do I."

After the thirty minute drive from the grassy hill to the orphanage, Ben and Harry went upstairs to wash and change. Completing their nightly chores, they went into the living room where they sat down to watch television.

Around eight thirty Mr Saunders came in and said it was time for bed. It was later than Harry had thought. No wonder he felt tired. He was only six years old after all.

Slowly rising off the sofa, he and Ben walked out of the room into the hallway and then up the stairs. Slowly, they brushed their teeth and went to the bedroom he and Ben shared.

"So Harry, what kind of parents are you wishing for tomorrow?" Ben asked as they prepared for bed.

"I don't really now. I suppose someone who'll love me for who I am. But I don't really mind if I'm not picked. It's just the luck of the draw I guess."

Harry and Ben climbed into their beds and Harry sat down his and began to meditate.

"Why do you do that? It's weird." Ben said as he pulled the covers over.

"It's something I've always done really," Harry replied. "It helps me sleep and organise my thoughts."

Ben drifted off to a deep sleep, yet Harry stayed awake meditating. His thoughts slowly wandered to his current life. It was better now than it ever had been at the Dursleys, yet he felt alone. Slowly, Harry slipped off the bed, dressed quietly, and slowly walked along

the hall and down the stairs. Carefully not to wake anyone, he put on his shoes, pulled on his coat, and opened the front door.

Harry had not decided where to walk, so he just walked aimlessly, allowing his feet to take him wherever they wished. He followed the road around the block and saw a footpath going into the trees. Not caring about thieves, he walked along the track for ten minutes before he noticed that he was getting ever closer to the Burrow. He had not intended to walk this far, but his curiosity drew him nearer.

What was the Burrow like now? What was Ron like? What was Ginny like? Slowly, he reached the outskirts of the Weasley home. He walked around the edge of paddock that held the Quidditch posts and sat down near the gate. A sense of calm overtook him. Finally, he felt like he was home.

The sound of a door slamming drew Harry's attention. Ginny had slammed the backdoor and started to walk towards the paddock. Panicking Harry looked around trying to find somewhere to hide but found nowhere. Ginny walked to within about ten meters and sat down crying. Harry had only seen her cry like this twice before. The first was at Dumbledore's funeral. The second was when they broke up in his sixth year. Careful not to startle her, he shuffled himself over to her. Ginny looked up slightly taken aback that a six year old stranger was in her garden.

"What's wrong?" Harry asked in a caring voice.

"Who are you? Why are you in my garden?" answered Ginny.

"Sorry, my name is Harry." Deciding that revealing himself as Harry Potter was not the best idea since she probably had a massive crush on him "Harry Evans," Harry said, glad that he had thought to use his mother's maiden name before Ginny spotted the hesitation.

"I went for a walk and got lost. Are you okay? You look like you've been crying."

Ginny looked up into his face, and sniffed a little before mumbling a couple of words that Harry could hardly hear.

"Sorry, I couldn't hear you. You don't have to talk about it if you don't want to. What's your name by the way?"

"Ginny, Ginny Weasley and my brothers are the most horrible brothers in the world."

"I'm sure they're not that bad." Although, if he had to live with Fred and George all year round then maybe he would feel like Ginny.

"You don't know my brothers. Fred and George are tricksters, playing pranks nearly everyday; figures that their birthday is on the first of April. They're twins."

Harry put a comforting hand on her shoulder. "Look, it's late Ginny. Why don't we head back inside? I'm sure your parents are wondering where you got to."

"I want to stay out here! They don't care. All they care about is whether Percy is going to Hogwarts. They don't love me. No one does," Ginny said stubbornly.

"Ginny, if you want a friend, maybe we could be friends? I live in the orphanage downtown."

"But that is a couple of miles away, at least a twenty minute walk. Why are you all the way out here?"

"I needed to think. I can't at the orphanage. It feels too lonely there."

"You don't have any friends?" asked Ginny her voice laden with concern.

"Well I got a friend, but I don't really know him."

"You could be my friend if you want." Ginny said looking up hopefully into Harry's face.

"Of course Ginny, I would love too." Harry replied putting his arm around Ginny and hugging her. "I will always be your friend."

"GINEVRA MOLLY WEASLEY"

A plump, kind-faced woman marched over to where Ginny and Harry were sitting, hands on her hips waiting for an answer.



"WHAT ARE YOU DOING? DO YOU REALISE I'VE BEEN WORRIED FOR THE PAST THIRTY MINUTES!"

"Sorry mum, I was just talking to Harry. I was upset after what Fred and George did."

Molly Weasley looked down at her daughter then across to the boy sitting next to her. She slowly looked him up and down and remarked how he looked a lot like. . .

Ginny, seeing who her mum was looking at, told her his name. "Mum, this is Harry Evans; he is from the orphanage from town."

Molly looked at Harry up and down with her piercing eyes. Her eyes slowly studied his forehead, where Harry hastily pulled down his fringe to hide his scar; he did not want Mrs. Weasley recognising him.

"Well, why don't you both come in? It's very late you should be in bed."

"Sorry Mrs. Weasley, I didn't mean to do any harm. I'll just walk back to the orphanage."

"You will do no such thing, young man. You will come in now before you catch a cold."

Harry and Ginny walked into the Burrow where Mr. Weasley and all of Ginny brothers were sitting at the kitchen table.

"Ginny!" shouted Ron.

Harry slowly looked around the kitchen and noticed that it did not look much different than it would in a couple of years' time. Ron walked over to Ginny and hugged her. Ginny smiled at Ron then introduced Harry

"Ron, this is my friend Harry"

Harry stuck out his hand and shook Ron's. "Please to meet you." For the next ten minutes Harry was introduced to all of the Weasley family including Bill and Charlie.

Harry slowly looked around the kitchen and noticed that not one bit of magic was in sight. Obviously, the Weasley's thought he was a Muggle. Harry slowly sat down at the table and listened to Mrs. Weasley, who was now screaming at the twins. Evidently, Ginny had told her why she had fled outside.

After a while, she calmed down and went to the cupboard to get some drinks. Whilst Mrs. Weasley was doing this, Harry looked in the doorway to look straight into the eyes of none other Albus Dumbledore.

"Good evening, maybe I can ask who you are, my young gentleman."

"My name is Harry." Harry did not say his last name, knowing Dumbledore would either figure it out or at least see his scar in the time they were looking at each other. Dumbledore's eyes travelled up to his forehead and set upon his scar.

He asked gently, "May I be inclined to know your last name as well?"

Harry now felt trapped: not thirty minutes ago he told Ginny and Mrs. Weasley that his surname was Evans. He knew that this would not fool Dumbledore. Dumbledore knew Evans was his mother's maiden name and, even if he did not, the man's legilimency would let him know that Harry was lying.

Silently looking around the table, his gaze falling lastly on Ginny, he silently asked forgiveness. His eyes remained locked with Ginny's and he said, "Potter"

Shock passed over Ginny's face and she remained in confused silence. Mrs Weasley had dropped the mugs she was bringing over; they dropped to the floor and smashed to bits, whilst Dumbledore continue to stare at him.

Molly thought that she had recognised him; now the image of James swam before her eyes and suddenly she wondered why she had not made the connection immediately.

"And may I require why you are here Mr. Potter?" asked Dumbledore.

"You may, but I want to do it in private. I'm sorry Ginny, but I will explain it later."

"All right, everyone upstairs now!" ordered Mrs. Weasley.

Slowly the Weasleys all walked up the stairs, Ginny looked back at Harry one last time.

"I promise I will explain everything. Maybe not straight away, Gin, but one day you will know."

Harry turned his gaze towards Dumbledore and started to explain.

"I live in the orphanage downtown and decided to go for a walk; I just walked somewhere random and ended up here."

"How did you come to live at the orphanage?" Dumbledore prodded.

The question infuriated Harry.. Dumbledore did not he even check up on him. "My aunt and uncle were arrested for ABH and neglect. If you ever had decided to look up on me, you would have known this. I guess with your knowledge of me and Dudley you can guess who the infant was. However, as you don't care I wouldn't expect anything less. So, naturally, I didn't have any other family. Therefore, I was sent to the orphanage. It's quite nice. Maybe you should go have a look."

Harry stared defiantly into Dumbledore's eyes waiting for the man's reaction to his words.

"Harry, if I had found a hint of them mistreating you..." Dumbledore started but was interrupted by Harry.

"But how would you find out a hint? Like I said, it's not like you ever checked up on me."

"I am very truly sorry Harry, I hope in time that you will forgive me."

Harry slowly calmed down and looked at Dumbledore's face. "Albus, my friend, fortunately for you, I forgave you when I learnt why you sent me there. Just trust me when I say anywhere would have been better."

"You truly are a remarkable boy Harry." Albus said, his face now with a smile. "But forgive me for asking but how do you know why I sent you there?"

"That is a story for another time I feel. I don't hold grudges, I got over it a long time ago and now we must move on. The question now is, what is going to happen to me? I don't really want stay at the orphanage and, although I love it here very much and it is my home as much as Hogwarts, I don't want to be a bother to Mr. and Mrs. Weasley. I suggest my godfather."

Dumbledore looked up at Harry and, asked with some confusion in his voice, "Sirius Black?"

"Indeed, my innocent godfather."

"Innocent? I think you are mistaken Harry. How do you even know about Sirius?"

"I have my sources. But, I assure you, he is innocent."

"And exactly how do know about Sirius Black and what proof do you have of his innocence?"

Harry ignored the first part of the question; the twinkle in Dumbledore's eyes had returned in force and Harry thought the old man might have an idea of how he knew of Sirius' innocence. "By giving the ministry Peter Pettigrew, of course."

This time Dumbledore did look surprised. "He is alive?"

Harry smiled crookedly. "If memory serves, Peter is in this very house."

Both Mr. and Mrs. Weasley started at the statement and looked at Harry with their mouths hanging open.

"How. . ." Mrs Weasley was flabbergasted that someone could be in her house without her knowledge.

"Maybe I should explain, Pettigrew was and is an Animagus. Sirius and my father are as well. It is a remarkable story, Albus, but alas

not mine to tell. What needs to be said is that Peter Pettigrew was the traitor, not Sirius, and his Animagus form is a rat."

Mr. Weasley inhaled sharply and Mrs. Weasley looked ghostly white and muttered one word. "Scabbers."

"Indeed Mrs. Weasley, Scabbers is Peter. I believe at this time he is Percy's pet."

Albus Dumbledore leaned forward on the kitchen table they were using for the discussion. "Well Harry, it sounds like you have a very interesting story to tell."

"I do, but now is not the time. May I suggest we summon an official from the Ministry as well as Remus Lupin? They should both be here for Peter's unmasking.. Someone from the Ministry for legal matters and, I believe, Remus will want to know what really happened that night he lost his best friends."

Dumbledore nodded. "Of course, I'll have them here first thing in the morning. Am I correct in thinking that you would want to witness the event as well?"

"Of course, he betrayed my parents. He is the reason they're dead. Why would I not want to be here?" Harry said with disgust in his voice.

"Maybe you should stay here for the night, it's a bit late to go back to the orphanage," Dumbledore said. "Don't worry about Mr Saunders, I will sort out everything."

"As long as Mr. and Mrs. Weasley don't mind."

"Of course we don't mind," Mrs. Weasley said.

"Then I will stay," concluded Harry.

Albus Dumbledore stood. "Harry, tomorrow you must explain how you know all of this and why I feel like believing you is the right thing."

"Because Albus, you always do the right thing," Harry said answering the second question. "If the time should come when you

have to make a choice between what is right and what is easy remember the boy who did what was right, the boy who was brave because he came face to face with Voldemort. If you are wondering, yes that boy died at the hands of Voldemort."

Dumbledore furrowed his brow and said "You are very interesting Harry. I hope you will explain everything soon."

"I will, but I'm very tired now and would like to sleep."

"Harry, you can share Ginny's room as you two have become good friends," Mrs. Weasley said surprising everyone.

"Thank you Mrs Weasley. Which room is that?"

"Up the stairs, third door on the left."

Harry trudged tiredly upstairs to bed.

The next morning Harry woke up to a scream. It seemed Ginny was not expecting Harry to be in her room.

"Sorry, Ginny, I didn't mean to scare you. I just spent the night here because it was late and your parents suggested your room as we are friends and I don't really know your brothers."

"It's all right I just wasn't expecting you to be here," Ginny said calming down.

"I am sorry about everything Gin. I will tell you soon, but right now I just hope we can still be friends. You're the only true friend I feel that I have got at the moment."

"Why did you lie to me Harry?" asked Ginny, hurt evident in her voice.

"Like I said, I will explain, but not today and I'm not totally sure when, but one day when you're old enough to understand I will tell you."

"You just like my parents and brothers: 'You're too young Ginny, you'll understand when you're older, blah blah blah!' Do I need to remind you that I'm only one year younger than you."

"You're terribly smart for a five year old ."

"Flattery will get you nowhere, Mr. Potter," Ginny retorted and emphasized his last name.

"Nah it won't." Then he suddenly remembered something about Ginny he had found out in sixth year.

"But, if I am right then tickles might do the trick." With that he jumped on Ginny and started tickling her like mad. She laughed so loud that Mrs. Weasley came upstairs to see what the fuss was about.

"My, my, I see that you two have made up quickly. You two can get dressed and then come downstairs for breakfast. Harry, Dumbledore said that he will be here this morning at eleven and it is already nine-thirty. I hope this gets sorted soon, I couldn't really sleep last night knowing. . ." She broke off and patted Ginny's head.

"Of course Mrs. Weasley, it will be done soon. I just have to win this tickle match." Harry smiled then went back to tickling Ginny.

"Fine, but I must warn you, she is a very good tickler."

After ten minutes and Harry finding out just how good Ginny was at tickling, for some reason he never knew that about his wife, he and Ginny walked downstairs fully dressed. They walked down into the kitchen where the rest of the Weasleys were. They were all looking at him as he walked in.

"He isn't a monkey in the zoo you know." Ginny stated looking around at her brothers.

"Thanks Ginny." Harry said as the rest of the Weasleys went back to their breakfast. Harry sat in the seat next to Ginny and started to eat breakfast. He never managed to eat as much as he wanted at the Dursley's and, although the orphanage did not starve him, there was no better cooking than Mrs Weasley's. So Harry dug in hungrily.

"Harry!" exclaimed Mrs Weasley. "Don't they feed you at that orphanage?"

"Of course, but your food tastes so much better. Best ever I've tasted."

"That is very flattering, dear, but you might want to eat a bit slower."

Soon they had finished their breakfast and Mrs. Weasley announced that they were going to Diagon Alley, but Harry would stay with Mr. Weasley as he needed to go back to orphanage. Little did the seven Weasley children know that Harry would probably be here when they returned.

"Ah, but mum can't I stay here with Harry," Ginny protested.

"No, dear, you're coming with me," replied Mrs. Weasley and then gathered her children so that they flooded one by one to Diagon Alley. Meanwhile, Harry finished his breakfast and waited for Dumbledore to arrive.

At about ten to eleven, there was a knock on the door and Albus walked in, followed by a confused looking Remus Lupin and two Ministry officials.

Dumbledore nodded to him. "Harry, are you ready?"

"Yes, I'll just go get Peter." The two ministry officials looked towards one another obviously contemplating something.

"He's not mad." Harry heard Albus say. Quietly walking into Percy's room, he found Peter in his cage asleep. Harry picked up the whole cage and walked downstairs to the waiting men.

"So what is this all about Albus? You said that you got news on a murder and supporter of You Know Who," stated one of the ministry officials.

"Patience, Jordon," replied Dumbledore. "All will be revealed in a minute, but Remus please tell me, do you recognise that rat."

Remus Lupin gingerly lifted the cage and peered into it. He looked at the rat for several seconds before recognition lit in his eyes.

"How is this possible? He's supposed to be dead! Sirius killed him." Remus' eyes remained locked on the rat.



"He was set up," Harry explained. "Sirius wasn't my parents' Secret Keeper, Peter was. As soon as Sirius and Peter swapped, Peter went to Lord Voldemort and betrayed them. Betrayed me. Then when Sirius finally caught up with him, wanting revenge for my parents' deaths, Peter screamed that Sirius had betrayed them, blew up the street killing the Muggles, chopped off his finger, and then transformed into his Animagus form."

Utter shock settled onto Remus's face. .

"My parents didn't tell you because they thought you were the spy. The reason that they swapped was because Sirius and my parents didn't think that Voldemort would ever think that Peter would be their Secret Keeper. It was a bluff. I suppose it was Peter's greatest day when he handed Voldemort my parents. I would kill him right now if I didn't have to keep him alive so that we can free Sirius."

"How do you know all of this Harry?" asked Dumbledore

"That is another story for another day. You will find it absolutely fascinating, but it isn't the right time at the moment to go into it. But I will tell you everything I can at this time. I promise you that."

"Very well. I suppose it is time for Peter to reveal himself. Remus if you wish," said Dumbledore gesturing to the cage and trapped rat.

Remus took Peter out of the cage, threw him to the floor, and pointed his wand at Peter whilst muttering an incantation.

Within seconds, Peter stood before the whole group. Looking scared out of his wits.

"Ah, Wormtail," greeted Harry. "It is so god damn jolly to see you old chap, how have you been my friend?"

Wormtail just stood there speechless whilst Dumbledore, Remus, and the two Ministry officials were shocked at Harry's politeness.

"Come now Wormtail, you know it is impolite to greet someone who said hello to you first. Didn't Voldemort teach you any manners? Tut tut and his Death Eaters say he is a great leader for the pure bloods, shame they don't know he is half blood. I'm sure they think he's pure

blood. Come on now, speak up! If you don't, I might have to curse you and, I assure you, you don't want that.

"Harry, you're alive! Remus, my old friend, it's so great to see you," Wormtail said and started to walk over to them. With a flick of his hand, Harry threw Wormtail across the room and into the opposite wall.

"So sorry, seem to have lost control of myself there. I just didn't want your hands on me. After all, you did betray my parents. What I want to know is why?"

Wormtail slowly looked up at Harry. "Me. . .Betray Lily and James? You're mistaken Harry. I would never..." But he was interrupted by Harry.

"Don't play games with me, fool. I know everything! The best you could do now is start telling the truth."

Wormtail continued to plea his innocence. "Harry. . .I am innocent! Sirius tried to kill me."

"Alas, he did, but why? I can tell you why! Because you betrayed my parents and he wanted revenge. I'm not surprised that he felt it was his fault when he discovered his best friend had just been killed by Voldemort. He had convinced them to make you the Secret Keeper."

"Harry, please..."

Harry slowly lifted his hand towards Peter and he screamed out in pain.

Harry lowered his hand. "Now, the hurting will stop Wormtail once you start telling us the truth." The pain Wormtail was in looked to lesson and he started gasping from the aftermath of the curse.

"You have to understand Harry I never meant it! You Know Who has very strong powers that you could not comprehend. If I disobeyed him then he would have killed me."

"THEN YOU SHOULD HAVE DIED" shouted Remus. Harry looked at Remus, he had forgotten the man was there. "AS WE WOULD HAVE DONE FOR YOU."

"I'm sorry. I really am. I never meant it! I didn't want them to die."

"Of course you meant it, Wormtail." Said Harry. "You meant every bit of it; you were just unlucky that you got caught. Albus, that bit of magic has greatly weakened me and I'm very tired. I trust that you can take it from here."

"Of course Harry, but we will talk about this."

"Of course, Albus, of course. I suppose now that we know the truth, Sirius will be set free?"

"He should be free by the end of the day," assured Dumbledore.

"Thank you, Albus."

And with that Harry walked out of the kitchen and up to his and Ginny's room, laid down on his bed, and drifted off to dreamless sleep.

A/N: Heya Guys. Finally the Second chapter is finished, say thank you for Intromit for beta reading this again he's a good mate to agree to it, but I do need a proper one as he has said he don't have enough time to do it all the time. Anyone up for the job? I'm going on holiday in 2 weeks time so don't expect another update for at a month maybe a month and 2 weeks. Have fun reading I hope you enjoy it. And review of what you think. Plus add suggestions of what you to see happen in this story. I already got an outline but if you have good ideas I might put them in. have fun reading it and for those who already haven't put this in your alert list, I promise it will be a very good story! C ya guys

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Harry woke up to a loud crash and a scream. He slowly got of his bed and walked down to the kitchen in which he found Mrs Weasley and all of the Weasley children all looking at the door where Sirius Black stood.

"Err who screamed?" asked Harry

Ginny turned towards Harry and said simply, "Ron." This caused Harry to burst out laughing and it was a full five minutes before he finally stopped.

"My Ron what a scream you got," said Harry before asking, "Sirius, are you alright?"

"Harry" Said Sirius in a croaky voice. "I got to say thank you for setting me free. And might I ask though how you knew all that information, not that I won't be eternally grateful mind you."

"Ah...erm that's kind of hard to explain," Harry muttered looking around the kitchen "maybe we can discuss it later?"

"Mr Potter. You said you would explain to me how you knew all this information, and just between you and me I'm kind of suspicious," Explained Dumbledore, who had had followed Sirius into the room.

"Of me Albus old friend, why would you be suspicious of me? I'm just a 6 year old boy," replied Harry innocently.

"Firstly, you're talking to me as if I were an old friend even though we only met one another yesterday. Secondly you know my first name although I am not aware that I had informed you of it."

Harry kicked himself in the arse for letting something so simple as that slip, thought Harry thought that he might be able to cover up his mistake with some well placed replies.

"But who hasn't heard of the great Albus Dumbledore, greatest headmaster Hogwarts has ever seen, the only wizard who Voldemort feared," A shiver went around the Weasley's as Harry spoke his name. "The great wizard whose defeat of the dark wizard

Grindlewald is the stuff of legend. Why you're at least as, if not more, famous than I am, surely I would have heard of you."

"Not when you've been living with muggles, and I'm pretty convinced that your aunt and uncle wouldn't have that knowledge, I have even come to think that they didn't even tell you you're a wizard. Which begs the question how do you know you're a wizard plus how did you know that the Weasley's were a wizarding family. I don't think that your turning up here last night was a coincidence of you just happening to stumble across them."

"There was no way of getting around you was there?" he asked in defeat, "I knew that this might happen." Said Harry sighing. "Although I might add that me ending up in that orphanage was just luck, nothing to do with me."

"So are you going to tell me the whole story?" asked Dumbledore.

"I suppose I have to now, however I will only tell you and Sirius. Sorry but that's the only people that I want to know my secret. For now," For now he added as an afterthought.

"That request I will grant you, for now, if the Weasley's don't mind." Replied Dumbledore.

"Great, so where do we go to do this, I kind of kicked them out of their kitchen this morning and so I don't really want to do it again this evening." Harry explained

"For a walk maybe?" suggested Sirius, "now being out of Azkaban I really would love to go for a long walk and I have a feeling your story is going to be a long one."

"A walk is an excellent idea," Stated Dumbledore, "Harry if you wish to come with us"

"It's not like I have a choice now is it." With that Harry, Albus and Sirius walked out of the kitchen door passed the chickens onto the road that headed into town. They walked for 5 minutes before anyone started to talk.

"So Harry" started Dumbledore. "I think I can safely say you're not six years old."

"Nah your right on that account, I'm twenty one."

"Time travel? But I thought that when you go back in time you don't go back to your body you just go back as a sort of spectator and watch yourself," Exclaimed Sirius.

"Unless you know certain spell books which are currently residing in Potter Manor," Harry explained, "then, you can re-live time."

"And why may I ask Harry, would you want to start re-living your life from the age of six?" Asked Dumbledore with a slight knowing twinkle in his eye.

Harry laughed at that "I wouldn't really, I was planning to come back on my 11th birthday I think I might have messed up a just a little."

"I would say so," Said Sirius with a chuckle, "So what happens in the future do I get a wife, children, have fun playing pranks?"

Harry again laughed at that but instantly stopped when he thought of what he would tell Sirius. "What do you want to know?" asked Harry in a voce with a deep, solomn voice, that gave away his depression on that though.

"That bad was it?" asked Sirius, "Everything Harry, if I know what happened maybe I could avoid it by the sound of your voice it sounds as though things don't go as I would have liked them to."

"I only found out about you when you broke out of Azkaban in my 3rd year at Hogwarts."

"Me, break out of Azkaban!" interrupted Sirius with surprise evident in his voice

"Harry, how did Sirius manage to break out of Azkaban? It's never been done before, well at least not in this timeline," asked Dumbledore looking almost as surprised as Sirius himself.

"Well Albus, you see Sirius here knew he was innocent. This somehow managed to keep Sirius sane as this thought wasn't a happy thought but just a sort of fact so the Dementors couldn't suck it out of him. Because of this he was still able to perform magic.

Most valuable, still be able to transform into his animagus form. He managed to escape by transforming into his dog form and slipping through the bars he then swam across the North Sea to solid land. A real sizeable feat wouldn't you say Professor."

"Of course but this information is vital, if any prisoners in there are un-registered animagus then they could possibly escape." Dumbledore said in a worried voice.

"That is possible but as the Dementors suck out all your powers, the only reason it didn't with Sirius is like I said, cause Sirius was innocent. So if an animagus did escape then they are probably be innocent" Said Harry

Dumbledore looked down onto Harry with admire in his eyes. "You really are full of answers aren't you?"

"Well knowledge of the future helps. Plus I had the best mentor in the magical world," he replied with a very familiar twinkle to his eyes

"And may I ask who that was?" asked Dumbledore.

"You of course." Harry said cheerfully.

"So how or when does Voldemort come back?" Asked Sirius

"In my 4th year at Hogwarts. I won't go into massive detail now. But the basic line is that he takes me to the grave yard in which his father is buried, does some spells, has is body back. This is when I plan to kill him, if we have destroyed all his Horcrux's that is. That of course assuming that things run true to my knowledge"

"So if you plan to kill him in your 4th year why come back to your 11th birthday?" asked Dumbledore.

"Cause there is stuff that happens before then I wanted to change. Like freeing Sirius and other stuff as well that I would like to keep privet for now. Plus I need the years to kill all of his Horcrux's."

"Interesting Harry, he has more than one?" Dumbledore asked clearly horrified at the very idea..

"Yeah, I'm not sure if he's made his 6th Horcrux yet or not but by the time I meet him in the graveyard he will of have."

"So what do you plan to do first?" asked Sirius

"Live a normal happy childhood. I won't forget about Voldemort but I want a happy childhood with friends before I have to go and kill Voldemort. Just like any other child."

"Maybe we should be getting back indoors, its getting late and its not exactly warm in February neither am I as young as I once was." Said Dumbledore.

With that Dumbledore, Sirius and Harry began making the short journey back towards the Burrow.

"I do hope that this secret will just stay between us?" asked Harry

"Of course Harry," Replied Dumbledore

"Err Harry... I was wandering... I know that you like it at the Weasley's... but after... you know... I got everything sorted out... it won't take long time to do... I was wandering..." Sirius said stumbling over his words.

"Yes Sirius I would love to live with you. You are my god father after all; it would be like a dream come true," answered Harry truthfully.

Sirius just beamed like he had just won the lottery. "Oh just you wait, I'm going teach you loads of pranks ready for Hogwarts, it will be brilliant, teaching you to fly, teaching you spells...."

"Sirius, I think, being in the moment of you been very happy that I wanted to live with you that you forgot that I already know these things therefore you don't have to teach me, just be there for me like my father would have wanted himself to. Don't try to be my father, be yourself and love me for who I am, and we will get along just right."

"Righty ho, firewhiskys all around then," Sirius shouted



Harry laughed again "I think that Mrs Weasley might have something to say about that remember she will think I am only six. I think I will stick with butter beer, it tastes way better anyhow.

Sirius looked gobbed smacked. "James's son not liking firewhisky. Dumbledore, are you sure we haven't made a mistake? This is the right Harry Potter?"

They all laughed as they walked up to the door of the burrow, they walked in to find that the Weasley's had gone to bed. Harry slowly walked up the stairs and into his and Ginny's room. He laid down on his blow up bed and slowly looked over to where Ginny was sleeping. Harry had only been up for an hour and a half so he didn't feel like sleeping. He just looked at Ginny sleeping peacefully. Harry didn't know how long he stayed there like that. He could look at her sleeping forever and not really care. He was just glad that he was here, Ginny was here, he would be living with Sirius soon, and everything looked like it would be just as he dreamed it could have been minus his parents. His life at the precise moment, Harry told himself, was just perfect.

A/N: heya guys another chappy up I know it is way shorter but really this chapter was just so that Sirius and Dumbledore knew the situation, next chapter will be either Harry's 10th birthday or Harry being 10 years old and it coming up to his 11th birthday haven't quite decided yet. If any of you are disappointed that I wont right much about Harry's childhood with being friends and that with the Weasly's, then I suggest you review and tell me what content I could put in the chapters, anyway enough bubbling from me go click that nice button next to were it say's review :)

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Several years had passed since that evening where he let Sirius and Dumbledore into his secret and Harry was now 10 years old with his birthday coming up soon. And the long awaited letter to tell him he had been accepted into Hogwarts. Harry was secretly glad he didn't have the burden of his secret just on himself. It was useful for Sirius to cover up for him when ever he made a mistake. He remembered one time when he was at the Weasley's Harry had been talking to Ginny when Ron had bumped into her and caused her to fall to the ground whilst hitting her head on the way down. Harry quickly ran to Ginny and wandlessly repaired her injury with Ron in full view. Sirius finally managed to convince the Weasleys that it was out of shock that Harry had done accidental magic to repair Ginny's wound. They finally believed him and went back to there daily routine however Ginny continued to keep a close watch on him afterwards.

Harry slowly walked out of his bedroom and downstairs to the kitchen to have breakfast. Sirius was already up which surprised Harry as Sirius never got up before eleven and it was currently only half past eight in the morning.

"I think I must be dreaming Sirius, either that or I am hallucinating, I have never seen you once up before 10:30 and the only reason you got up then was for the fact that you heard a lady salesman at the door."

Sirius laughed at this and said quite proudly, "It's your birthday soon, 11 years old an all that. You should be getting your Hogwarts letter any day now."

"You do know that it isn't really that exciting, after all I've like already had seven of them."

"Don't spoil the fun Harry this might not be new to you but I sure as hell am excited for you, after all this is your first letter from Hogwarts from my point of veiw, even if it isn't the first time for you. That's why I'm going to buy you your birthday present early. What pet would you like; I mean what pet was yours from before?"

"An owl called Hedwig, it would be nice to see her again, she was the second friend I ever had then."

"That's settled then, we'll be going to Diagon Alley after breakfast."

"Sirius it isn't my birthday for another two weeks, and I won't be getting my letter until then either so why are you so excited about going to Diagon Alley today?"

"Harry, why does your godfather have to have a reason to spoil you?"

"Cause you've never spoiled me before that's why," Harry said with a smile across his face. "Plus I know legilimency and I know when you're lying to me."

"Harry that's unfair."

"Not really Sirius, it's just hard for you to surprise me. Living with one of the famous marauders, it's very useful."

"No wonder I can never prank you."

Harry sat silently before Sirius finally got around to answering his earlier question..

"Molly wanted us to meet with them there."

Harry laughed at Mrs Weasley's endeavour to involve him in everything the Weasley children did.

"Well In that case I don't suppose we can argue really can we, I mean who would want to get into her bad books. I for one has been there many of times in my previous life and this one, it really isn't a pleasant experience."

"I just feel lucky I haven't had the pleasure of feeling that yet," Said Sirius

"Don't worry, knowing your difference in personality I don't think that it will be long before you do. Just do me a favour and warn me so I can leave the room before she starts."

"That bad," Sirius said with an anxious look gracing his face.

"Well the secret, so I've heard, is not to let her get into her stride. I learnt that from Fred and George."

"Thanks for the warning mate."

"Didn't do it for you," Harry said casually, "like I said I just don't want to be in the room when she gets going."

"Well at least I now know how much you care," Sirius said smiling down at Harry as he got up from the table and put his plate in the sink.

"I care; I would just prefer watching her shouting at you. It's very fun to watch." Harry smiled getting up from the table and heading out of the door and up the stairs.

"I give you food and shelter and look what I get in return, I don't know," responded Sirius with a sigh.

"Well I got to say you do pay for the food but I would like to remind you this is the Potters Manor and as such is therefore actually my house."

"You are not legally owner of this house....." started Sirius

"Until I am seventeen. But I am technically 25 years old, 26 in a couple of weeks, therefore legally I am the owner of this house."

"Care to tell the Wizengamot that piece of information."

Sirius smirked at Harry when he figured out he had won.

"Okay okay upstairs get ready we need to leave soon."

Harry grudgingly left the room and walked up the stairs to the landing where he turned right and headed to the far end of the hallway and enter the small door that was on the right. Harry's bedroom was very big and had golden wallpaper with red curtains hanging by the windows. Harry's bed was pushed up against the left wall with the TV and entertainment systems on the left wall. On the wall behind him which had the door built into was a picture. This picture was of Godric Gryffindor.

"Hello Harry," the portrait said, "how's my favourite Great great great great...."

"Save it Godric, there's too many greats in there to say it all out before you get to grandson."

Godric smiled at Harry, "How's my favourite Heir? Is there anything new going on in the world?"

Harry looked over to Godric with a longing look in his face, "Nothing really I'm just waiting for Hogwarts to begin. Pretty boring really. Not that I don't mind this life I have now, Sirius looking after me., being friends with the Weasley's....

"Knowing Ginny sooner," Godric added with a sly smirk gracing his painted features.

"My god not with Ginny again you know were destined for each other. You know we're husband and wife. Why can't you just leave it for once?"

"Cause I can tell that you being without her for this long is hurting you."

"And what exactly, Godric, am I meant to do? Go up to a 10 year old and tell her were married. Yeah I can tell that that's going to go down really well. Don't forget Mrs Weasley's temper and the fact that she has 6 brothers all who would line up to kill me over and over again."

"I agree but I also feel like she should know the truth. If you keep it from her for to long she might not forgive you."

"I'm think maybe before my 4th year or after Voldemort comes back I'm not quite sure."

"I think Harry that's too long to wait. Are you really able to wait that long to date her?"

"Well...."

"I think Harry that as soon as you start dating her you should tell her,"

"How do you even know that we'll end up dating, I mean she might not actually like me this time around. She doesn't have the crush on me because she's known me for so long. She sees me as her brother now. Maybe... I don't know, maybe I can convince her to give us a shot. But I got to do some thinking and telling a ten year old that we are married although we've had no wedding is not going to help much. Just give me some time to figure some things through."

"It is of course your decision, so are you coming in?"

"No time, going to Diagon ally to meet the Weasleys."

"Ah, the Weasleys, would Ginny be there any chance?"

"You never give up do you?"

"When it's as important as your wife then no I don't. Where's your Gryffindor bravery?"

"When it comes to Ginny's bat bogey hex, out of the window and running away over the hill," Harry answered with a wry grin.

"Well I do suppose it is your choice, but I must warn you. The longer you wait the harder it will be and the more she'll hate you for keeping it away from her."

"I know Godric, I know," Harry let out a sigh before continuing, "I just want to be careful I don't want to lose her before she has a chance to hate me."

"I completely understand and my lips are sealed."

"I got to go; Sirius wants to buy me a birthday present even though it isn't for a couple of weeks. Plus he's jumping about waiting for my first letter from Hogwarts. It really is annoying."

"Well surely you can see were he's coming from, he will never replace James but he loves you like you're his own son. And Hogwarts was home to him. He just wants you to be really happy. You have this massive burden on your shoulders and he doesn't

really know how to help. He just wants to give you a normal happy life as much as he can."

"I guess. Thanks for the talk Godric I'll see you later. I better get back down before Sirius begins wondering what I'm up to."

"See you later Harry."

With a final wave Harry slowly walked out of his room, back down the stairs and into the kitchen where Sirius was waiting impatiently for him.

"Finally Harry, what took you so long?"

"Nothing really, you know, just stuff."

Sirius never went into Harry's room. Harry had forbidden it. So he didn't know what was in there. He hadn't told anyone about him being Godric's heir, not even Dumbledore and he planned to keep it like that. If word got to Voldemort that he was the heir of Gryffindor then he would be in a whole new set of danger.

"Alright floo to the Leaky Cauldron. The Weasley's should be already there."

"Now why can't I just apparate? It will be just as quick and a hell a lot easier," complained Harry. Although he had used it many of times he still didn't like using the floo network.

"Cause you are not old enough, and don't give me that malarkey about you being 20 blah blah blah, according to the ministry you are only 10 nearly 11 so not old enough to apparate."

Harry dropped his shoulders in defeat, grabbed the floo powder stepped into the fire whilst shouting. "DIAGON ALLEY" with a great pull he was twisting and turning through fireplaces glimpsing lots of rooms with lots of different furniture and colouring on the walls. Harry was just starting to feel really sick and wishing that ride would finally stop when there was a horrific crash which entailed Harry toppled out of the fire place and into none other the Ginny causing them both to fall onto the floor. Sirius burst out laughing after watching everything from where he stood across the room, having left just before Harry.

"You never get the hang of the landings do you?" Sirius struggled to say in between burst of laughter.

Harry ignoring Sirius's comments stood up lending a helping hand to Ginny helping her off the floor.

"Are you okay Gin?"

"Err yeah thanks Harry" Ginny said looking down at her feet and barley whispering.

"Ginny what's the matter?" Harry asked concerned. Ginny never acted like this before. Well Harry now remembering, she acted like this when they first meet in Harry's other timeline, but that was because... Harry slowly, like the minute hand going round a clock, realised it was because she had started to have a crush on him. Or actually he hoped that was the reason. He had heard it was around this time before. Although she was fine only 2 weeks ago when he had last seen her.

"Nothing, Nothing." Ginny said looking down at her shoes.

Harry looked over to the twins who he saw had massive grins on there faces. He could tell that they knew that Ginny had a crush on Harry and was ready to tease her to bits. Harry obviously not wanting this to happen decided to distract them from Ginny. "So guys had fun doing any pranks lately."

"Oh yes," said Fred, or was it George. Harry always had trouble distinguishing the two even though they were this young, "You should have seen the prank we pulled on Ginny yesterday."

This was not were Harry wanted the conversation to go. Harry looked at Ginny who could tell that she was thinking the same thing has him.

"Got her good we did. And you never guess who we found out she has a crush on?" Said the other twin.

Ginny looked horrified that her brothers were just about to reveal her secret. She looked desperately between the twins. Harry could see in her eyes that she didn't want Harry to know. Harry thought that it



was sweet but his heart went out to Ginny. After all he did love her even if she was still so young, if she didn't want Harry to know at the moment then she should have peace of mind.

"I don't want to know. Ginny is my best friend and she will tell me when she is ready. I suspect the only reason you two know is that you forced it out of her when pranking her."

The twins looked a little disappointed but Harry could see Ginny sigh in relief. Harry hated the fact that the twins picked on her. Of course they never did it in front of Mrs Weasley. The amount of trouble they would get in would be outstanding. Even the twins were afraid of Mrs Weasley. But then again, Harry thought, he hadn't met anyone who wasn't afraid of her temper.

The group slowly left the pub and walked out into the backyard where Sirius got out his wand and tap the bricks that would reveal Diagon Alley. The shops were exactly as Harry remembered them from when he had first entered the alley all those years ago. Then it had been Hagrid as his guide now though he had his family. Though he hoped that Ginny would once again become his family in more than just his dreams.

They had to go to Gringots first which Harry wasn't looking forward to. He didn't want them to see how much gold he had. He knew that the Weasley's was very sensitive about money. Slowly they walked to the end of Diagon Alley where the tall white building of Gringots stood imposing over that end of the alley. They all walked into the tall building and Ginny gasped.

Harry frowning at her asked. "Haven't you been in Gringots before?"

"No I haven't but you have?" Asked Ginny confused.

Harry instantly went quite for the moment. Truthfully in this lifetime he hadn't been in Gringots before. He had completely forgotten to act shocked and now every Weasley was looking at him strangely.

"I brought him in when he was younger," interjected Sirius. "I need to buy some stuff and Harry was too young to be left on his own at the time."

Harry smiled and sighed with relieve. That was a close one he needed to be careful not to let things slip. The goblin name Bilblous served them and Harry instantly remembered that this was the goblin that served Harry the first time he came into Gringots.

B/N – griphook was the first goblin to serve him wasn't he

"Hello" said Bilblous "What can I do for you"

"Me and Harry here would like to take some money out of our vaults." Explained Sirius

"Of course and do you have your's and Mr. Potters keys?" Asked Bilblous

"Right here," said Sirius. He pulled two golden keys out of his right pocket and handed them over.

"Right you are. Vaults 687 and 711, I'll have someone take you down straight away."

Harry had to snuffle a gasp from his mouth. Sirius vault was just 2 vaults away from where the philosopher's stone sat at vault 713. Harry wondered if Dumbledore had made Hagrid pick it up yet. Bilblous called over Griphook to take them to there vaults.

Harry looked over to the Weasleys and saw that they too were with a goblin and heading down to there vault. Harry and Sirius followed Griphook to the same door, and saw an empty cart ready for them to get in. Harry and Sirius climbed into the cart waiting for Griphook to get in too. As soon as they were in they zoomed of along the tracks twisting right and left and zooming around long bends. After what Harry thought had to be one of the best rollercoaster rides in the world the stopped at Harry's vault, though Harry's head didn't stop spinning till a couple of hours later.

Griphook took Harry's key from him and put it in the lock. Harry could hear the mechanism of the lock undoing before the door slowly opening to reveal lots of piles of gold. Harry turned to Sirius who didn't look shocked at the gold so Harry thought that his parents must have told him about it before they died. Harry thoughts went to his parents and he wondered what they would think of him now and

what he was doing. Would they be scared for him or proud of what he was doing, maybe both. Harry didn't really know. Harry thought of his parent's portraits in his family vault waiting for him to come and see him. Alas he didn't have access to that till he would be 17 and hopefully all of this would be over by then. Harry filled up his money bag and put it back in his pocket. Finally he stepped out of the vault and followed by Sirius made his way back into the cart for another great Rollercoaster ride to Sirius's vault. They didn't spend so much time in Sirius he just quickly filled his money bag up ever so quickly and jumped back into the cart he wasn't even in there for more then 30 seconds. Harry looked oddly at Sirius strange behaviour.

"I never like it in vaults," Sirius explained, "I always feel that the door is going to close and trap me in there."

Harry laughed all the way in cart ride back to where they were to meet the Weasley's.

"Good day to you both," Griphook said waving goodbye, "and Mr. Black you need not worry about being shut in vaults we are currently going through our longest patch of that not happening. 32 days to be exact. Have a nice day now," and with that Griphook turned leaving Sirius and Harry to walk over to the Weasley's. Harry shot a glance to see how Sirius was coping with that information and saw his face had turned ghostly white.

"Err...Harry maybe...err...you could retrieve my money from my fault from now on there's a good boy," Sirius said with his face ghostly white.

Harry laughed at Sirius and started to walk over to the Weasley's were they stood waiting for them.

"What's up with you Sirius?" George asked looking Sirius's ghostly face.

"He's scared of being locked up in a vault,." Harry explained. Harry saw the looks on the twin's faces and knew that Sirius wasn't going to live this one down. "You do know Sirius that Griphook was joking?"

Sirius turned to look at Harry before he smiled at them all. "Oh thank god for that."

Harry and the Weasley's all laughed as they moved out of Gringots and into the hustle and bustle of the alley. As Mrs. Weasley explained to her children where she wanted to go. Harry saw that Ginny looked sad and so to cheer her up Harry suggested that she could come with Sirius and Harry to the pet shop. So Harry, Ginny and Sirius headed up the street to Magical Menagerie. The pet shop sold every single living creature you could think of for a pet yet no owls. Harry looked at Sirius and Ginny and could see that Ginny was thinking the same thing. "Err Sirius I thought you said you were going to get me an owl."

"I am" stated Sirius as he walked down the isles.

"Then why are we in here?" Ginny asked, "they sell owls in Eeylops Owl Emporium not here."

"Err...well I need to look for something for Hagrid. He wanted me to buy him something. Stay together you two," Sirius said as he walked away. Harry and Ginny slowly walked around the shops looking at the creatures. Harry could see Ginny getting nervous as they spent more time alone together. Harry was just about to talk to her when he heard some people arguing over.

"You always were pathetic" said a voice that sounded very much like hissing.

"I... I..." said another hissing voice it sounded scarred to Harry.

"Why don't you just leave, go away, your meant to supported what he did, he is a speaker after all."

Harry turned around and saw that there was a couple of snakes in a glass container 4 of the snakes were ganging up on one small green snake.

"STOP," Harry shouted at the snakes, "leave him alone."

"What's it to you boy"

"If he doesn't support Voldemort then fine leave him alone."

"But he speaks our language you should support the people who speak our language."

Harry smiled at the trap that the snake just fell into "therefore you should also support me? I am not a speaker as well."

The snake, that Harry thought must have been the leader, thought for a moment before saying "It is of course our duty to serve the ones that speak our language what is your name my I ask?"

"Harry Potter" Harry watched as most of the snakes looked on but some of them and slowly started to slither away from fear.

"You traitor. You speak our language yet you nearly kill our leader. You're just as bad as Simon," screamed the leader snake. Harry looked over to the small green snake now hovering in the corner. Without thinking Harry put his hand inside the glass cage picked up the frighten green snake and let him slowly wrap himself around his arm.

"Better now?" Asked Harry, "both of us will be leaving."

"This day couldn't get any better," laughed the large snake that Harry called the leader. Harry turned with the snake still wound tightly up his arm and looked straight into Ginny's shocked and frightened face.

"Hey Gin." Harry paused for a moment before continuing. "I... err... would appreciate it if you didn't tell anyone I could talk to snakes?"

Ginny slowly nodded her head. her eyes not leaving his. Harry looked into Ginny's eyes and felt himself get lost in there brown interior.

Harry slowly shook himself from his gaze and slowly walked with Ginny to the back of the store to find Sirius.

"Thank you Harry Potter. I would just like to say that I disagree with them whole heartedly," Simon hissed at Harry.

You don't have to explain yourself don't worry everything will be okay."

Harry looked over to Ginny who was looking around trying not to look at Harry.

"I'm sorry Gin I'll try and not to talk to much parseltongue when you're around."

"No its okay just hard getting used too I suppose. How long have you known?"

"Not that long," Harry lied

Ginny smiled and said, "Your secret is safe with me."

Harry and Ginny walked to the back of the store and into another room which was awfully dark.

"Sirius," Harry called out. No answer. Harry slowly looked around the room and started to walk by the empty cages when all of a sudden he tripped over an abandon stall and fell down cracking his arm against a clear plain of glass that was leant against the wall.

"HARRY!" Ginny shouted as she rushed over to him and grabbed his arm.

"I'm f-f-fine Ginny never bet-t-ter." Harry stumbled.

"DO NOT LIE TO ME HARRY POTTER!" Ginny screamed. Ginny turned his arm around to see a massive cut all the way down his arm and it was oozing out blood.

"We need to get you to the hospital now." Ginny started to try and pick up Harry but he was too heavy for her and they slumped back down.

"Ginny. I'm all right....."

"Stop being like that. You know you are not fine. We need help. SOMEONE HELP!" screamed Ginny

All of a sudden there was a flap of wings and a massive white, red and gold bird flew over Ginny's shoulder and towards Harry, It's long tail feathers splayed out behind it. It glided to Harry's arm put its head close to the cut and started to cry. Its tears fell onto Harry's

wound and Harry felt his wound healing. Sudden realisation hit him. This bird was a phoenix. After a couple of seconds Harry could feel the cut close and he could move his arm. Harry looked at Ginny who still had tears coming down her cheeks.

"It's okay Gin, look I'm healed. Everything is okay."

Ginny just sat there in shock "How... What..."

"Ginny we were very lucky in the fact that this bird is a phoenix. Its tears have healing powers. So it healed my wound. Everything is okay I'm better now. You can stop crying."

"A... p-p-phoenix. T-t-there meant to be very rare." Stuttered Ginny through her sobs.

Harry took his hand and gently wiped a tear from Ginny's left cheek with his right thumb. Harry felt Ginny shudder slightly at the closeness of them.

"Don't cry Ginny, I'm okay. The phoenix healed me and I'm no longer hurt. Please stop crying."

Ginny sniffed a bit and slowly the silent tears that were strolling down her face slowed down and eventually ceased.

"I guess I don't have to wonder who you have feelings for anymore," Harry bravely said. Harry could see look shocked then a worried expression come over her face. "No Gin don't worry I see no reason for you to keep this from me. After all we are best friends are we not?"

Harry could see her sigh at the words. "Of course Harry. Best friends for ever," Ginny replied.

Harry didn't like the forever part. After all he did love her. But she was too young. And she didn't love him. Not yet anyway. Just wait Harry said to himself. Wait till you third year then you could go out with her. Just wait till you third year. Harry slowly stood up pulling Ginny up with him and walked out of the room completely forgetting the phoenix on his shoulder.

"Harry are you alright my friend?" asked Simon who was still wrapped around the arm that didn't get injured. Harry just nodded and slowly walked up to Sirius who was at the counter holding a package that Harry didn't know.

"What's in the bag Sirius?" asked Harry

"Never you mind, were have you been? I've been looking all around the shop for you two. Molly would have killed me if I lost Ginny. Mind you she properly would kill me if I lost you as well. Err what's with the bird?"

Harry startled, remembering the phoenix on his shoulder. "Err.." But before Harry could explain the shop keeper came up from the door behind to counter.

"Ah so you're buying some pets are we. That would be 14 galleons for the snake and 60 galleons for the phoenix."

Harry looked at the shop keeper and then up to the phoenix. "Excuse me sir but the owner's of phoenix's are chosen buy the phoenix, not buy the owner. I see no reason to pay you for it. Coincidentally I had completely forgotten that it was on my shoulder. I see no reason to pay so much for something I didn't ask for."

The shopkeeper looked shocked at the smartness of Harry and the fact that it was he who was paying and not Sirius. "Very well then" The shop keeper said "just kindly it her back were you found her.

Harry sighed and walked back out to the room he found her and then back to the counter. "Just the snake then." Harry said.

"20 galleons then please." The shop keeper said as he ran up the new total for Harry.

"20... you said 14 a second ago." Harry complained

"20 or you won't be getting the snake either." The shop keeper said not even bothering to hide the smile. Harry reluctantly forked over the 20 galleons and left the shop the snake still wound up his arm.

Harry silently dragged Sirius and Ginny over to the closest alleyway in between the shops and waited.



"Harry..." Sirius started but a look from Harry made him shut up.

"Harry what are we doing down here." Asked Ginny with a tremble in her voice it was obvious that she didn't like it down there.

The answer came in a flash of fire just above Harry's shoulder and a second later the phoenix had landed on it.

"Like I said to the shop keeper, the phoenix chooses its master not the other way around."

"You knew that would happen, didn't you." Ginny said.

Harry slightly shocked that it was Ginny who bravely said this and not Sirius nodded his head. "Yes I knew it would do this. And I must ask you two not to tell a soul I own either the snake or the phoenix. If word got around Hogwarts that I own either...." Harry trailed off hoping that they would get the picture.

"We understand and I'm sure Ginny does too." Said Sirius. Harry looked over to Ginny who simply nodded.

"Thanks guys. I knew I could trust you two. Right, where to next."

"Well," Sirius started, "as I can't officially call these your presents as A) I didn't pay for them and B) you officially don't have them. I'll buy you that owl we talked about this morning."

Harry smiled at Sirius and thanked him. Then a thought occurred to him. How to carry around the phoenix and the snake without people noticing. Harry turned to the phoenix. "Mm I haven't got a name for you yet but is there any chance you could figure out where I live and take Simon with you back to my room?" The phoenix looked into Harry's eyes for a moment before nodding her head. She flew to the cage that Simon was in and disappeared in a burst of flames.

Sirius coughed to get Harry's and Ginny's attention. "Well then after that I believe we need to go to the owl Emporium." Harry and Ginny slowly followed Sirius out of the alleyway and down Diagon Alley to the next shop.

A/N: this is the beta version of this chapter, beta read by mike. However both I and mike have had a long talk about where the story is going and he doesn't like it, therefore he is resigning from being my beta reader. Therefore I NEED A NEW ONE LOL. So apply apply apply in the reviews for the 5th chapter

Disclaimer: I do Not own Harry Potter.

Harry woke up on the morning of his birthday happy. He was going to go to the Weasley's and have a massive party, Mrs Weasley had insisted on it. Of course not everyone would be there as Bill and Charlie were abroad taking care of dragons and breaking into cursed tombs. Harry slowly got dressed and went downstairs to have breakfast and for wait for Sirius to wake and before long Harry had bacon and egg frying for breakfast. "Well," Harry thought, "it was his birthday so what if he had a fry up. At least Mrs Weasley would think it was okay," But then she always thought a fry up was okay. Harry waited for Sirius to wake but come 11:30 Harry had still yet to see his godfather.

Harry walked up to stairs and into Sirius bedroom yet he wasn't there. Confused Harry walked all around the big house and he still couldn't see Sirius anywhere. Harry started to get worried. Figuring that he might need the Weasleys help he apperated outside the kitchen door. Harry walked into kitchen to see all the Weasleys, Bill and Charlie included, and Sirius all gathered around the fireplace there backs to Harry.

"When is he going to get here," complained Ron. "you got me up, just to stand here and do nothing."

"Ron, its eleven in the morning surely you should be wide awake now, plus its Harry birthday. Surely you don't mind getting up early for that," Ginny said

Harry smiled at Ginny's attempts to explain why he hadn't got there yet. She always was defending him. No matter what it was about.

"I'm getting a drink, be right back." Ginny turned around and came face to face with Harry. Harry quickly lifted his fingers to his lips to notify Ginny not to say anything and then pointed to the door of the kitchen that led out to the yard. Ginny slowly followed Harry with a very confused look.

When they got away from the backdoor further enough so that the Weasley's wouldn't see Harry turned back around to face Ginny's shocked face.

"How did you get here?" Ginny inquired, "And way to spoil the surprise birthday party."

"Surprise birthday party?" Harry asked, "Whose idea was that? I thought my party was tonight."

Ginny blushed a little before telling him it was hers. "But now you gone and spoiled it."

"Hey I just woke up and Sirius was missing so I thought I'd come here and see if anyone knew where he was," Harry explained.

"And again I ask how did you get here?" Ginny asked again.

Harry was quite for a moment. He didn't want to tell Ginny about apparating. She would get very suspicious and maybe tell her parents. Then a sudden thought occurred to him.

"Estelle," Harry said a little too quickly, "Estelle brought me here."

Ginny looked Harry over for the moment and then looked up into Harry's eyes and just stood there staring at him.

Ginny stood there just looking into Harry's eyes for about 5 minutes with Harry returning the gaze. He could stand there forever and get lost in her. Remembering the Weasley's in the kitchen waiting for him he slightly shook his head trying to get out of his trance.

"Yeah Estelle brought me here," Harry said shaking Ginny from her gaze.

"Oh right well maybe you should call her and get her to take you back to the Potter Manor in order for you to floo here," Ginny suggested, "I didn't set up this surprise for you to spoil it."

"ESTELLE!" Harry called out. There was a flash of fire and the phoenix appeared. "Take me back home. Ginny has set up a Surprise for me and I don't want to spoil it after she put so much work into it."

Harry looked at Ginny smiling. "Thank you Harry," Ginny said, "just remember to act surprised when you come out of the fireplace."

"Hey what do you take me for?" Harry said acting hurt but they both know he didn't mean it.

"A big fat troll who does not know anything, so go act surprise but not dumb. Oh wait no, that isn't an act is it," Ginny said insulting Harry, a smile across her face. This was the Ginny Harry knew and loved not the shy putting elbow in the soap dish Ginny.

"Huh what happened to the shy 'oh my god I've got a crush on my best friend' gone?" Harry said trying to tease her but not wanting to cross the line between playful and hurtful

"Just don't go all shy on me and do something funny like putting your elbow in the butter dish whilst I'm around."

Ginny blushed and said, "I've haven't done that once Harry Potter. And I don't attend to."

"Yeah you keep saying that, just get Fred and George to take pictures when you do it. I want to remember that for ever." Harry said whilst sticking her tongue out at her. Before Ginny could react he nodded his head towards Estelle and they arrived in the kitchen of Potter Manor in London. He quickly got himself a drink. And waited for five minutes for Ginny to get back in the kitchen of The Borrow before flooing to the party.

"SURPRISE!" everyone shouted as Harry stepped out of the fireplace. Harry put on his best act of looking surprised and not one person suspected him of knowing. After the pat on the backs he got from the Weasley brothers they all went into the living which was decorated with balloons and a massive buffet. It also had a banner hanging from the ceiling saying "Happy Birthday Harry"

Even though Harry knew it was coming he was still gob smacked that they had all done this. Even Bill and Charlie had come over from Egypt and Romania to celebrate his birthday. "What about your work with Gringots?" Harry asked Bill

"I can have a day of once in a while can't I. I always take the birthdays of my siblings off. You're just as much of a member of this family as everyone else." Bill answered. Harry took this to heart as even though he counted the Weasley's as his family he wasn't sure if they counted him as part of there family. After greeting everyone

there including Lupin and Dumbledore who had shown up halfway through Harry sat down to open up his presents.

He grabbed the first present and ripped it open noticing it was from Mr and Mrs Weasley. It contain his very own hand for there clock in the kitchen. He looked up with tears in his eyes.

"Wow, I'm speechless. Thank you I now know I belong somewhere. I know I live with Sirius and that but I always thought you lot as family. I know you feel the same way now and it means a lot to me," said Harry.

With a flick of Mr. Weasley wand the hand whisked it way over to the clock in the kitchen. Harry got up and went in just at it settled itself in between Ron's and Ginny's. After a second of it landing on the clock it moved to were all the other hands were pointing, currently at 'home'.

"It will point at home whether you here or at Potter Manor," Mrs Weasley explained, "We didn't want you to feel that were taken you away from Sirius or replacing or parents. We just wanted you to know we all love you like we were family."

"I love it," Harry said hugging Mrs Weasley before returning to the living room. Sirius just smiled at him knowing to well what he was feeling. Harry often told him about how the Weasley's always treated him as family and Sirius was forever thankful for that Harry had had someone when he wasn't there for him because he was on the run or stuck in Azkaban. Sirius also then knew how the deaths of each of them must have affected him yet here he was without a care in the world. He might be 26 but the deaths of people you call family so close to you must of hurt yet Harry hadn't showed it. After listening to Harry, Sirius had worked out that it was only a week after Ginny's death that he came back in time. He hadn't slept between her death and when he did the spell. Sirius reckoned that you couldn't get over someone's death so close to you, especially your wife's, in that time. And he knew that he hadn't grieved yet because he had been with him most of the time. Sure he had spent six months in the orphanage but reports suggested he was happy and never complained or cried once. He was happy sure but he hadn't grieved yet. They might be alive now but watching them die he hadn't dealt with yet. Sirius was sure of this. And he wasn't looking forward to the time that he did. Sirius turned back to the present time to see hat

Harry was opening up his last 3 gifts. One from the twins. The other from Ginny. The other from someone he didn't know.

Harry slowly picked up the gift from the twins rather cautiously. Harry knew what the twins were like and was scared of what they might have bought him.

"Don't worry," George said.

"It won't bite or anything," Fred continued.

"Trust us," George finished.

Harry took one look at the twins obviously not agreeing with them. He knew the twins and what they were like so he carefully unwrapped the present. It was awfully thin Harry thought as the wrapping came off and out fell a piece of parchment. Harry couldn't believe it. He wasn't expecting this. Not yet anyway. He looked up to Fred and George lost for words. "Don't you need this anymore?"

"It's just some bit of parchment," Fred said obviously shocked at Harry's question.

"Yeah," George agreed, "we thought it would be funny to give you something you might need for next year at Hogwarts. That what mum told us to give you."

"FRED AND GEORGE WEASLEY HOW DARE YOU DO SOMETHING LIKE THIS..." Mrs Weasley started screaming and then suddenly stopped as Harry raised his hand to tell her to stop.

"I appreciate the concern Mrs Weasley but I think me and the twins both know that this isn't just a bit of old parchment," Harry explained. Harry turned back to Fred and George who had confusion written over their faces, "This will come in useful at Hogwarts thank you."

"How do you know..." George started

"What it is," Fred finished.

Harry looked around the room and saw grinning faces on both Sirius and Remus face's and simply said. "I'll introduce you to some marauders later this evening."

The look on Fred and Georges face was priceless.

"You know the marauders?" Fred asked

"Who are they?" George asked

"How did you meet them?" Fred countered

"Oh my god too many questions at once. Yes, tell you later, tell you later in answer to all three of your questions," Harry replied before anyone else could say anything.

The confused look on there faces was priceless but Harry turned to the next present. He didn't know who it was from but he wanted to leave Ginny's till last. He carefully unwrapped the present and out fell a silvery cloak. His dad's invisibility cloak.

"Woah!" both Sirius and Remus said as soon as they saw it.

"Haven't seen that in a long time, have we Remus?" Sirius explained

"No. last time we saw that Sirius and your father were sneaking into the kitchen to grab some food after your mother specifically told them not too," Remus answered, "one of my best memories is of me walking into the kitchen to see both your father and Sirius stuck on ceiling with cake flying at them. Two of the marauders getting pranked. Priceless. They never lived that down, neither Sirius or your father.

Harry looked up to see Sirius grinning ear to ear. "What, we were hungry and who would have thought that Evans would do that to us. Sorry I mean Potter as she was then. Sorry Harry didn't mean to mix that up. As I was saying she was such a goody two shoes at school. It surprised us both that she had done it.

Harry just shook his head and went to open his last present from Ginny before the twins interrupted.



"MARUDERS!" they both shouted together. Harry looked over to Remus who had let that information slip.

"Well done Moony, spoil the surprise I had for them. Maybe both you and Padfoot over there should just get pointed signs over your head saying Padfoot and Moony with Arrows pointing at you."

"You're the marauders?" asked Fred

"Purveyors of Aids to Magical Mischief –Makers?" asked George

"Yup that's us," Sirius said proudly before looking at the glare he was getting from Mrs Weasley.

"YOU MADE MY BOYS PULL PRANKS. YOU'RE THE ONES WHO DECIDED TO GET MY BOYS INTO TROUBLE. YOU'RE THE ONES THAT MADE FRED AND GEORGE CHOOSE TO BECOME PRANKSTERS!" Mrs Weasley screamed

Both Sirius and Remus started to back away very slowly from Mrs Weasley.

"You know Sirius," Harry said "I told you, you would get on the wrong side of her sooner or later."

"DON'T THINK YOUR GETTING AWAY FROM THIS TWO YOUNG MAN!" Mrs Weasley shouted at Harry "YOU KNEW ABOUT THIS, YOU KNEW ABOUT THE MARAUDERS!"

"Hey, that's unfair it's my birthday. I'm not meant to be able to get in trouble on my birthday," Harry complained, "anyway how was I meant to know Fred and George had the marauders map."

Mrs Weasley turned to look at Harry and then calmed down a little. "Harry I'm sorry I'm just displeased with these four over here." She said jerking her thumb over too the twins, Remus and Sirius.

"Molly" started Remus "how were we supposed to know that Fred and George had it?"

"Don't think that as an excuse Remus. You made it, therefore its your responsible, both you and Sirius. Now Harry hand it over here please?" asked Mrs Weasley holding out her hand.

Harry didn't know what to do should he hand it over? He didn't want to; it would be very useful to have this map in his hands. However before he succumbed to her waving her hand at him Sirius spoke up.

"Molly obviously you are mad at us cause it was in the hands of Fred and George for that we sorry. However it was a birthday present to Harry and therefore I think wrong to confiscate it from him. Secondly all it is a map of Hogwarts. It shows the classrooms and the hallways and the shortcuts and secret passageways around the school therefore it will make Harry's job easier to get to class quicker without getting lost," Sirius explained, he conveniently forgot to mention the secret passageways out of the school as well as being able to avoid teachers if he was up to something.

Mrs Weasley was lost for words. "Well then, if you put it like that, I suppose then it might be alright." She slowly walked back over to Mr Weasley who simply chuckled and put his arm around her and pulled her in a hug. Harry looked over to Ginny and wished that he could do the same with her. He missed the hugs and the kisses from her. It was lonely without his wife. Sure they were best friends now, but he missed the closeness you get from being husband and wife. Or just boyfriend and girlfriend. But Harry reminded himself that that couldn't happen yet. Just a couple of more years to go. Just wait till he knew for definite that she had fallen in love with him. He didn't want to start dating her now and find that she didn't fall in love with him. Plus at the precise age they were too young anyhow. She was only ten for goodness sake.

Harry slowly picked up the last present that was from Ginny and opened it. Inside the small package was a necklace with a square which opened up to show a picture of both him and Ginny playing around on the field laughing and enjoying themselves. Harry didn't know what to think. All he wanted to do was walk straight up to Ginny and kiss her. He knew he couldn't do that so instead he just settled for a hug. He wrapped his arms around her and hugged her tightly smelling her hair that he always got caught up in whenever he was close.

"I love it" he whispered in her ear. He pulled back to see Ginny's face all red from embarrassment from being hugged like that but smiling anyway. He put the golden necklace around his neck and then down his clothes so it wasn't very noticeable.

He looked around to see shocked faces from her brothers, a smiling face from Sirius, a calculating look from Remus, a twinkle in his eye from Dumbledore and a knowing smile from Mrs Weasley.

"Right cake time?" Ron said shaking everyone out of there thoughts.

"Yeah I'm hungry," Harry agreed. So everyone got up of the floor and headed into the kitchen, where a massive cake stood. "That wasn't there when I flooed here," Harry said.

"Well no, it wouldn't be a surprise if you saw it first," Sirius said. Harry laughed at this and sat down ready to cut the cake.

2 hours later and a with a very full stomach, Harry went over to Dumbledore. "Hello sir, how are you?"

"Not bad Harry, not bad," Dumbledore replied.

"I must thank you for returning the invisibility cloak."

"No need to thank me, your father left it in my possession before he died I thought it best that it was returned to you. It may come handy at Hogwarts. I'm very intrigued about this map from the twins also. What exactly does it do?"

"The Marauders map? One of my best tools for mischief making. Along with the cloak. It show's every single passage way inside the castle normal and secret. As well as the ones leading out of the castle. All Seven of them."

"Seven you say? I'm sure Argus only knows four."

"That would be correct," Harry said smiling ear to ear, "Another reason why this is so good. It has passage ways that no one apart from the twins, Sirius and Remus know, about. Like I said it will become very useful for sneaking around at night." Harry suddenly realising what he just said to the headmaster of said school looked up to see Albus smiling.

"It has just occurred to me Harry," Albus stated, "that I have temporarily gone deaf and haven't heard a word of what you just said."

"You should have that looked into. You might go blind soon too if this keeps up," Harry suggested

"Well maybe, depends on what I see. If said thing isn't really doing any harm to the student's education..." Dumbledore trailed off. "Oh look Bertie Botts Every Flavour Beans. I had an unfortunate incident where I came across a vomit flavoured one in my earlier days. I should be able to settle for a nice toffee flavour one." He popped it in his mouth and his face became an expression of disgust.

"Earwax?" Harry asked knowing far too well what that flavour was before Dumbledore put it in his mouth.

"Maybe next time a warning might be nice?" asked Dumbledore

"What? And miss the expression on your face. Its priceless." Harry smiled up at the headmaster.

"Well I shouldn't have expected any less from you," Dumbledore said, swallowing the sweet.

Harry moved of back into the living room when 2 owls came through the open window. Harry was expecting this and really he was quite excited. One owl flew to Harry whilst the other flew to Ron. He took the letter from the owl and ripped it open to read the letter.

## HOGWARTS SCHOOL OF WITCHCRAFT AND WIZARDRY

Headmaster: Albus Dumbledore

(Order of Merlin, First Class, Grand Sorc, Chf. Warlock

Supreme Mugwump, International Confed. of Wizards

Dear Mr Potter,

We are please to inform you that you have a place at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. Please find enclosed a list of all necessary books and equipment.

Term begins on 1 September. We await your owl no later than 31 August.

Yours sincerely,

Minerva McGonagall

Deputy Headmistress

Harry grinned from ear to ear and slowly took out the other piece of parchment in his letter as he read his book list and equipment list.

## HOGWARTS SCHOOL OF WITCHCRAFT AND WIZARDRY

Uniform:

First year students require:

Three sets of plain work robes (black)

One plain pointed hat (black)

One pair of protective gloves (dragon hide or similar)

One winter cloak (black, silver fastenings)

Please note all pupils' clothes should carry name tags

Set Books:

All students should have a copy of each of the following:

The Standard Book of Spells (Grade 1) by Miranda Goshawk

A History of Magic by Mathilda Bagshot

A Beginners Guide to Transfiguration by Emeric Switch

One Thousand Magical Herbs and Fungi by Phyllida Spore

Magical Drafts and Potions by Arsenius Jigger

Fantastic Beast and Where to Find Them by Newt Scamander

The Dark Forces: A Guide to Self-Protection by Quentin Trimble

Other Equipment:

1 wand

1 cauldron (pewter, standard size 2)

1 set glass or crystal phials

1 telescope

1 set brass scales

Students may also bring an owl OR a cat OR a toad

PARENTS ARE REMINDED THAT FIRST-YEARS ARE NOT ALLOWED THEIR OWN BROOMSTICKS

Harry looked up to see Ron happy a smile across his face. "MUM, MUM, I GOT IN, I GOT IN" Ron shouted above everyone.

"Oh my, another son of to Hogwarts," Mrs Weasley said hugging Ron, "I'm so proud of you."

"I got in too," Harry said. Mrs Weasley just turned around and beamed at Harry before pulling him into a hug too.

"Congratulations Harry. I hope you have a wonderful time there," Mrs Weasley said.

After the commotion of both Harry and Ron getting into Hogwarts Harry moved of towards Ginny who was looking a little lost.

"Hey Ginny, Why are you so upset?" Harry asked

Ginny looked up and looked at Harry. "Oh never mind that Harry I'm just being silly." She looked backed down clearing not wanting to look at Harry and said "I'm going to miss you." Harry heart sank. His was going to miss Ginny too. He'd gotten used to having Ginny around all these years. To go to Hogwarts for the whole year without seeing her was going to be hard.

"I'm going to miss you too Ginny," Harry said looking into her eyes, "Who am I going to prank the twins with." This made Ginny chuckle as Harry pulled her into a hug. "You will be coming to Hogwarts next year."

"I know but that's a whole year away," Ginny said sadness in her voice. Harry looked around and noticed the headmaster looking around as if he was bored. A sudden idea struck him.

"Ginny, I need to do something I'll be back in a couple of minutes okay" Harry said. Ginny nodded as Harry starting to walk over to Dumbledore. "Sir I was wondering if I could have a word?" Harry asked Dumbledore. Dumbledore nodded his head and the two went into the hallway as not to be over heard.

"Harry what is wrong?" asked Dumbledore concern in his voice.

"Well you see. It's Ginny." Dumbledore's face grew slightly disappointed.

"I am sorry Harry for I know what you are going to ask and the answer is sadly no. Ginny cannot come to Hogwarts this year. She is not old enough." Dumbledore said before Harry could even get his question out.

"But you're the headmaster surely you can..." but was cut of from Dumbledore.

"My hands are tied Harry. It's the board of governors that decide the age you have to be in order to start Hogwarts. I'm sorry Harry but I can't let Ginny join this year." Dumbledore explained

Rather disappointed Harry made his way back into the living room and towards Ginny. The rest of the day went of without much interference. Harry and the Weasley brothers played quidditch in the paddock whilst Ginny went up to her room. Harry had asked her whether she wanted to play too but Ron said she couldn't fly and dragged Harry out of the room before either Harry or Ginny could reply.

All to soon and much to the bother of Harry who was having fun playing quidditch the sun was setting on his birthday and Sirius had called up to tell him it was time to return home. Slowly the Weasley's

brothers and Harry grudge back down to the kitchen were everyone else was for Harry to say goodbye. He gave a quick smile over in Ginny's direction which she returned before he stepped into the flames to return to Potter Manor. He and Sirius sat talking for a while in the kitchen before it was time for Harry to go up to bed. He grudgingly walked up the flight of steps and into his bedroom. He never even registered Godric asking if his birthday went well as he slipped into bed and drifted off into the realms of dreams.

A/N heya guys sorry this chapter took so long I was having problems with it. Next chapter will be Harry getting his school supplies which means it will be very short chapter as I can't really think how to make it long so it shouldn't be long till that one is up after this. Then it will be the Hogwarts express and finally off to Hogwarts. C ya guys



Disclaimer: I do not own Harry Potter.

Harry slowly dragged himself awake as he heard a pounding on his bedroom door. "GET UP HARRY." Sirius called through the door. "YOU GO TO HOGWARTS TOMMROW AND YOU STILL NEED TO BUY YOUR SCHOOL STUFF." Harry heard the footsteps walk away from his bedroom door and down the stairs until he couldn't hear them anymore.

"What the hell was that?" Godric said tiredly, having obviously just been woken up from the knocking.

Harry slowly rubbed his eyes, trying to get the sleep away from them and then pondered what had just happened. "Godric, get a notebook and pen." Harry told Godric.

"Why may I ask?" Godric replied.

"Easy, this is probably the first and last time Sirius gets up before me. A historic moment one shouldn't forget, don't you agree?" Harry said now opening the door in his dressing gown and PJ's and heading to the shower.

Godric chuckled. "Quite right there Harry, an historic moment I quite agree. Although as this is my only portrait and I don't have a pen and paper here with me I can not write it down."

"Damn. I'll just have to try and remember it." With that Harry walked out of his bedroom and towards the bathroom to get washed and showered before the busy morning ahead of him.

After a nice hot shower that awoke Harry much better than Sirius pounding on the door, he went down to breakfast where on the plate waiting for him were sausages and eggs.

"Since when did you learn to cook Sirius?" Harry said.

"Oh what's this, be sarcastic to Sirius day?" Sirius complained.

"No, I do that everyday so to actually call a full day in the year Sarcastic to Sirius Day, although that would be fun and a great idea, it would be illogic as you could probably call every day by that name. And I've only been sarcastic to you once. It's my way of a morning

greeting. How long have you known me now...?" Harry rattled off, not really paying attention to what Sirius was doing.

Sirius just shook his head. "Just shut up and eat. We've got to go to Diagon Alley to get your school stuff before we go to the Burrow. We're going to King's Cross with the Weasleys tomorrow so we're staying the night at their house."

"Ah Mrs Weasley's continuing endeavour to make sure I'm not alone in the world." Harry said sarcastically before he realised what had come out of his mouth. Sirius's face went from annoyed from Harry's remarks to angry.

"HOW DARE YOU. SHE TOOK YOU IN HER HOUSE, SHE TREATED YOU LIKE FAMILY. SHE'S LOVED YOU LIKE ONE OF HER OWN IN BOTH TIMELINES. I WILL NOT HAVE YOU MOCK HER WITH YOUR SARCASTIC NATURE. NOW FINISH UP, GET UPSTAIRS AND GET READY. WE WILL BE LEAVING IN 10 MINUTES NOW GO." Sirius roared, losing his temper at Harry.

Harry just sat there dumbfounded at Sirius's outburst. He knew Sirius was right. He had taken it a bit over the top. If he continued like this the sorting hat might actually put him Slytherin, which Harry decided if it did then he would walk right out of Hogwarts.

"I am sorry Sirius, I think I took it a little over the top." Harry apologised.

Sirius slowly calmed down enough so he wasn't shouting but Harry could still tell he was angry by the comments which, Harry thought, he had every right to be.

"Very well but move it, we don't have all day, we need to go to Diagon Alley before we go to the Burrow. And before you say we have all day we're meeting them for lunch at one and Diagon Alley will be bound to be busy with last minute shopping from students like us who completely forgot about how close September was." Sirius stated before turning around.

Harry just nodded and chucking the last bit of sausage in his mouth went upstairs to pack his trunk so all he had to do was add his new school books in it. He of course would carry his wand with him at all times. Harry slowly threw all his clothes in the trunk before slamming

it shut. Harry's trunk was rather a special trunk. It had several compartments. Four in fact. One he would use to put all his clothes in for the upcoming year at Hogwarts, one he would use to put his school stuff in. Another he would use for keeping items hidden, like the marauders map and his invisibility cloak. And the fourth one is where he would keep his notes on the future, what he would change, how that could affect the timeline etc. He kept the last two compartments locked and passworded. Harry left the trunk on his bed, grabbed the sack of gold coins he had left over from his last trip to Diagon Alley and headed back downstairs. However before he got to his door he was interrupted by Simon.

"Harry, how exactly have you decided to get me to Hogwarts too? I would die in that by the lack of oxygen." Simon hissed, rather annoyed Harry hadn't said anything sooner, indicating the trunk on his bed.

"Sorry Simon. I will get Estelle to take you to Hogwarts like the same way she bought you here. I will meet you in Gryffindor common room at midnight tomorrow night."

"And if you don't get into Gryffindor?" Simon asked

"What Simon, is that meant to mean?" Harry asked slightly angry

"Nothing, nothing Harry. Why are you so bothered this morning? First Sirius had to shout at you, and then you jump down my throat. I was only wandering how I would get to Hogwarts. What's up with you?" Simon enquired.

"Never mind Simon, I'm just a bit agitated. After all these years I'm finally going back to Hogwarts. Honestly I don't know what's up with me." Harry said wondering.

"Well you'd better sort it out if you want any chance to get back into Gryffindor. Anyway I'll see you tomorrow in your common room." Simon concluded.

Harry slowly turned around and saw that Godric was looking at him. "DON'T YOU DARE START TOO GODRIC." Harry said his temper slowly reaching boiling point but still not completely knowing what was going wrong.

"Harry," started Godric. "First off, I do not appreciate your attempt to start a shouting match with me. Secondly, I know exactly why you're acting like this."

"Yeah, really, please enlighten me." Harry said, his sarcastic hurtful comments coming back to the front. He really needed to stop doing that, it would truly hurt someone soon, if he said in front of people he didn't really want to hurt. Like Ginny.

"THAT'S ENOUGH." Godric shouted. "The reason you're feeling like this is Ginny." Harry gaped open mouth at his ancestor, trying to say something but nothing coming out to correct him. "I know you're going to miss her this year but there is Christmas and she'll join you next year."

Harry didn't want to admit it but Godric had hit it right on the head. He truly was going to miss Ginny and thinking about it just made him sadder about leaving her alone.

"You're right Godric, as usual." Harry said now smiling. "I guess I needed someone to give me a bit of a shock to wake me up. Hey it's only a couple of months before the Christmas holidays; I might be able to see her then. I suppose it won't be that bad. Again my apologies Godric."

"Not at all, not at all. What kind of person would I be not to pick you up on these things? Now hopefully we have sorted you out, go down and be yourself, have fun. And I'll see you next year or maybe like you said, at Christmas."

Harry smiled and walked out of his bedroom, trunk in hand and headed back down to the kitchen, ready to floo to the Burrow. He would drop his trunk off first at the Burrow before heading to Diagon Alley.

Sirius looked a little calmer as Harry walked back into the kitchen. He gave a look at Harry and then handed the tub of floo powder for Harry to take some. He took some out, walked over to the fireplace and screamed "THE BURROW." In a whirl of fire Harry whizzed past fireplaces until he felt himself slowing down. He suddenly outstretched his arms as Sirius told him to do to stop him falling over as he came to a complete stop at the Burrow's fireplace.

Unfortunately, he hadn't had his feet in the right position and he, like always, tumbled out of the fireplace.

"ARGH" Harry grunted out loud. "I will get this right, even if it's the death of me. I will get this right." Harry heard a chuckle and he saw Ginny on the other side of the room trying to stop herself from bursting out loud. "Oh, you think that's funny do you Ginny?"

Ginny, still trying to stop herself from laughing but failing miserably slowly nodded her head and said "It's good to know you're not perfect all the time." Ginny suddenly stopped laughing and blushed crimson at what she just said.

Harry seeing this decided to tease her even more and gave her a wink. Just so that she could see it of course. Ginny turned even more reddish and turned around and headed upstairs muttering something about leaving a book in her room. Harry turned around chuckling to himself and saw Sirius talking to Mrs Weasley. "Is it time to go Sirius?"

"Sure you know what to do." Sirius replied. Harry grabbed some floo powder hanging near the fireplace and stepped in the fire. Harry shouted "DIAGON ALLEY" and got whisked away between loads of fire grates before landing at the Leaky Cauldron. Harry only had to wait a couple of seconds before Sirius apparated right next to him. They headed out of the backdoor that led to Diagon Alley and soon found themselves in the hustle and bustle of the famous alley.

Harry already had money in his pocket which was left over from their last visit so they headed straight to Madam Malkin's Robes for all occasions. Sirius and Harry walked through the door and joined the queue that was building up. It was at least 20 minutes before he even got to Madam Malkin to fit the robes. Madam Malkin spent 10 minutes fiddling around with the robes, getting measurements and sorting out the material before announcing to Harry that he was done.

Harry and Sirius then headed next door into Flourish and Blott's to buy his school books. As well as the required books Harry needed for this school term Harry decided to buy some books on animagi and another on phoenixes. Harry wasn't very sure whether he wanted to train to become an animagus but it was worth getting the book just in case.

Harry and Sirius then went to buy him the pewter cauldron and Sirius, like Hagrid the first time around, refused to let Harry buy a gold one. They then went and bought Harry some potions from the apothecary. After filling up his stock of potion ingredients he would need for the year and some other potion ingredients he might need for things other than for the school curriculum there was only one more thing Harry needed to buy. That was his wand.

Harry and Sirius walked through the door to Ollivander's and Harry could sense the magic that was in the room.

"Hello Mr Potter. That wasn't a question just a statement of fact, you have you mother's eyes you know." Mr Ollivander said, startling Harry and Sirius out of their wits. "I was getting a bit worried that you weren't going to turn up. Never mind now never mind you're here now. Now what type of wand is right for you? Your mother had had a nice wand for charm work. Ten and a quarter inches, swishy, made of willow, your mother just loved it. Your father on the other hand favoured a mahogany wand. Eleven inches. Pliable. A little more power and excellent for transfiguration. You father really like that wand, however it's the wand that chooses the wizard of course. And Mr Black, excellent to see you. Oak ten and a half inches dragon heart string, excellent for transfiguration too I believe."

"Yes Sir." Sirius replied wondering how the old coot could remember all the wands he ever sold. It was rather remarkable.

"Well Harry hold out your wand arm then please." Mr Ollivander requested as the tape measure magically measured his arm and then the rest of his body from head to toe. As he went off to look for wands Mr Ollivander gave a speech on the wands he makes. "Every Ollivander wand has a core of a magical substance, Mr Potter. We use unicorn hairs, phoenix tail feathers and the heartstrings of dragons. No two Ollivander wands are the same, just as no two unicorns, dragons or phoenixes are quite the same. And of course you will never get such good results with another wizard's wand. That will do," Mr Ollivander said to the tape measure and it fell to the floor lifeless. Right then Mr Potter try this one." Mr Ollivander came out of the stacks holding a wand. "Beechwood and dragon heartstring. Nine inches. Just take it and give it a wave."

Half heartedly Harry waved it around rather bored, hoping it wouldn't take as long as last time for him to find his wand. Mr Ollivander snatched it out of his hand, obviously upset and gave him the next wand.

"Maple and phoenix feather. Seven inches. Quite whippy. Try..." Mr Ollivander explained. But before Harry even lifted it Mr Ollivander screamed out that it wasn't for him and took it off him. This lasted for a good hour before Sirius was starting to get restless.

"Its 1:15, we should have been at the Burrow a quarter of an hour ago." Sirius complained "Molly's gona kill me for us being late."

"It's not my fault Sirius." Harry replied. "Mr Ollivander just hasn't given me the right wand yet." Mr Ollivander return with another wand and yet that too didn't work.

"Tricky customer heh, not to worry I'll find the perfect match for you." Mr Ollivander said after another wand tried and failed. Mr Ollivander took the wand away and went back further into the store. 10 minutes later Mr Ollivander returned muttering incoherently. Harry only managed to hear a view phrases of what he said. "I wander.... Why ever not... unusual combination but might work." Mr Ollivander stopped in front of Harry and handed him a wand. Harry instantly recognised the wand as his own and smiled over to Sirius.

"Err I really don't like that smile. Mate, smile like at Mr Ollivander not me." Sirius complained backing up.

"Well... give it a wave then." Mr Ollivander said. Harry smiled an even bigger grin and waved his wand at Sirius. All of a sudden Sirius's backside caught on fire.

"AHH HELP I'M ON FIRE." Sirius screamed.

"Err maybe not the right wand then...." Mr Ollivander started before Harry spoke.

"Sirius stay still please." Sirius stopped running around and Harry flicked his wand at him. A gush of water appeared above Sirius head before crashing down on him, soaking him through to the skin.

"THAT WAS NOT FUNNY." Sirius said. Mr Ollivander was trying very desperately not to laugh. "AND NOW I'M ALL WET."

"Oh I'm sorry Sirius." Harry said pretending to just realise this and waved the wand at Sirius again. All of a sudden there was a strong wind flowing around pushing him around one way then the other. Sirius had a lot of difficulty standing up. Harry let the wind subside and looked at his masterpiece. Sirius's hair was all over the place and Sirius himself could barely walk in a straight line. His clothes were damp but not dripping wet and he looked murderous. His backside was still letting off a little bit of smoke from when the water put out of the fire.

Mr Ollivander looked at Harry and smiled a delightful smile. "Well I think we can say we have found you your wand. Curious though very curious."

"What is curious about the wand?" asked Sirius who was still eyeing Harry like he was the most dangerous animal in the whole world.

"I remember every single wand I sold Mr Black. It is very curious that Mr Potter here is destined to have this wand when its brother... why its brother gave him that scar." Mr Ollivander replied.

Shock took over Sirius's features as he looked at Harry and then at the wand he was holding. "Harry's wand is brother to Voldemort's wand?" Sirius asked, wanting confirmation

"Yes" was the simple reply from Mr Ollivander. "Now if you don't mind too much I'm extremely busy so good day to you." And with that Mr Ollivander walked away to the back of the store.

Harry and Sirius walked out of the store and towards the Leaky Cauldron. They both waited in the queue to the fireplace. They had to wait at least 15 minutes before they got a chance to floo to the Burrow. Sirius said he would apparate with the luggage. So Sirius disappeared with the shopping whilst Harry had to endure another bumpy ride from the floo system, arriving at the Burrow just in time to see a very annoyed Mrs Weasley shouting at Sirius to explain why they were so late.

A/N: yahoo I'm alive yahoo. The next chapter finally I was having real problems with this I shouldn't with the next one as its starts with



the Hogwarts express and then follows the philosophers stone so it shouldn't be a problem anymore. I think ill wait about 2-3 days before I start writing it. And then I expect it will take me a week or two to write it so from now on roughly I say expect an update every 2 weeks give or take a few days

Disclaimer: I Do Not Own Harry Potter

Harry groggily woke up on the morning of the 1st September and rolled over on his bed to look at the clock. The clock read 5:15am. Harry looked over to the window and noticed that the sun hadn't even risen yet. Knowing far too well that he wouldn't be able to go back to sleep he carefully got up and dressed, hoping to not wake Ron who was sleeping in the other bed in the room and walked out of the door.

Harry carefully tiptoed past Ginny's room in order not to wake her and headed downstairs and towards the kitchen. He walked into the kitchen to see Ginny and Sirius already sitting at the kitchen table talking.

"You know guys," Harry started trying to stifle a yawn. "It would have been better to not sit in the darkness." Harry nodded towards the other side of the room indicating the candles. "And Ginny is already up. Typical, I try very hard to walk past her bedroom door not to wake her and she's already down here talking to my godfather. Who in turn is up before me TWO days in a row now? I think I've gone into an alternate universe."

"I was too excited." Sirius responded. "You're off to Hogwarts."

"Isn't it normally the child's role to be excited?" Harry asked Sirius.

"True but you don't sound ecstatic so I thought that I would make it up." Sirius said. "Plus I'm having nightmares of someone pointing a wand at me and setting fire to my buttocks. You have no clue why do you Harry?"

"Moi, what is that meant to indicate?" Harry turned to look at the red headed figure which had a hot chocolate in her hands. "What is your excuse Ginny?"

"Couldn't sleep." Ginny said. "I was sent early to bed last night as you should recall. Therefore I woke up early. Honestly, my mother thinks I'm still 5 or something."

Harry went to the cupboard and put out a mug and started to get himself some hot chocolate like Ginny. After he poured himself some he went to the table and sat down next to Ginny.

"So what were you two talking about?" Harry inquired.

"Sirius was telling me tales of his experiences at Hogwarts." Ginny said.

"You got to the 3rd year Easter break prank?" Harry asked.

"Yes, Sirius was just about to tell me about it." Ginny said.

"Ahh Ginny, Ginny, you need to round him off before he gets to the 3rd year otherwise there's no stopping him and you'll be here for hours." Harry said smiling over to Sirius who in turn stuck out his tongue at Harry. "Now that isn't very adultish Sirius, you're going to make a bad example on Gin Gin over here." Harry finished, risking one of Ginny's nicknames that he knew she hated.

"NEVER call me that name." Ginny said with malice in her voice. "You ever call me that again and I swear I'll curse you. Bill taught me the bat bogey hex a couple of years ago okay. Ask my brothers about it."

Harry look over to Ginny knowing far too well the bat bogey hex. He had been on the unfortunate end of it a couple of times. He didn't want to repeat the experience.

"You're scary Ginny. You know that right, really scary at times. I don't like it. I don't know what Ginny I'm getting; the blushing one or the oh my god Ginny's mad run for the hills."

Ginny put an innocent smile on her face. "What on earth do you mean Harry?" Ginny said acting all innocent.

"Exactly that." Harry said in return. Indicating the way Ginny was now acting.

Harry and Ginny then spent the next few hours waiting for the rest of the Weasleys to wake up. It wasn't 'til seven that Mrs Weasley hurried down to the kitchen and noticed all three of them laughing.

"Oh good you three are already up." Mrs Weasley "I can't believe I slept in, we've got a lot to do before we leave. Harry are you all packed?"

"Yup, all packed and ready to go, all I need to do is shower and get dressed. Oh and I'm hungry so I might want to get myself some breakfast as well." Harry answered

"Well get going then. You don't have all day." Mrs Weasley said rushing Harry up the stairs. Harry had a shower and got dressed and went back down to get breakfast where he met the rest of the Weasleys dressed but sleepy. Harry sat down and force-fed himself bacon and eggs. He wasn't really hungry. He was nervous. He was finally going back to Hogwarts. To his first proper home. Of course the Potter Manor and The Burrow were home to him. But Hogwarts is where he felt like home first. Plus he couldn't wait to try out his new 'authority' at Hogwarts. He had a conversation with Godric a week ago about what being the heir of Gryffindor meant at Hogwarts.

"You" Godric had started "Now knowing that you are an heir of one of the four founders have a slight power over Hogwarts. Not much but slight. You of course can command Hogwarts to open locked doors, lock open doors, command the ghosts...

"Command the ghosts...?" Harry had replied in awe. "You mean I get to tell Peeves what to do and what not to do. This is going to be brilliant!" Harry had already started to think up the pranks he could get the poltergeist to do.

"You MUST not be seen." Godric said "Otherwise your cover will be blown and I don't think you want to add the publicity that you are my ancestor to the media's repertoire."

Harry had understood perfectly and started to wonder what exactly he could do. "This is why my dad managed to find so much about Hogwarts wasn't it? The castle recognised him as your heir and allowed him to find the secret passageways easier." Godric had just nodded and allowed Harry to mull things over. Now Harry had another reason to look forward to going back to the first place he called home. These next few years at Hogwarts was going to be fun.

Before Harry knew it the Weasleys, Sirius and Harry were gathered by the blue Ford Anglia waiting to ride off towards King's Cross station and the Hogwarts express to take them to school. It had been a tight fit but thanks to Mr Weasley's special features he had added they all sat quite comfortable in it. The ride had taken them a

while to get from the Burrow to King's Cross station. When they arrived it was 10:20am. Mr Weasley unloaded the boot and Mrs Weasley walked them all into the station. Mr Weasley was going to stay with the car. The trouble he could get into if the car was stolen by a muggle with its 'added features' was too much of a risk. Harry, Sirius and the Weasleys walked through the crowded muggle section of King's Cross before getting to the barrier between platform nine and ten.

"Right Percy you first." Mrs Weasley indicated and Percy walked straight at the wall between platforms nine and ten and then seemingly disappeared. Harry looked around to notice if any muggles noticed but was glad to find that not one of them batted an eye lid. He turned around just to see the twins run one after the other through the barrier. "Right Ron you next." Mrs Weasley said as Ron started to run at the barrier then disappear through the secret entrance to the platform. "All right there Harry, go on you next." Harry walked straight at the wall with Sirius following right behind and both of them went straight through the wall and appeared on the platform. Harry looked over to see the Hogwarts Express patiently waiting for them to get on it and whisk them away to Hogwarts.

Harry suddenly felt dread cover his body as he remembered the last time he had seen the train. It was Harry's 7th year. Although Harry hadn't gone to Hogwarts that year he remembered the attack that happened to the Hogwarts express halfway through its journey. So many people had been killed or injured during that attack. Half of the students that decided to return to Hogwarts after Dumbledore's death had been killed in the attack. Most of the other half had ended up in St. Mungo's hospital, including Ginny. Ginny was on life support for a good 3 months before she awoke from her coma. Harry had never left her side during those 3 months. Sleeping and eating in the very cubical that she was staying, his hunt for Voldemort's Horcruxes pushed aside, until Harry knew she was alright. It was another month after that the hospital deemed her fit to leave. Four months of not looking for Voldemort's Horcruxes but Harry hadn't cared. He stayed with her all the way through her rehabilitation of getting her to eat properly and getting her to be able to walk again. It was this experience that made Harry come to his senses about Ginny and him. He proposed to Ginny, promising to never leave her again and if she still wanted that she could come along with him, Ron and Hermione on the Horcrux hunt. She of

course agreed and after 3 months of rehabilitation the four of them left to destroy Voldemort.

But the price was dear. It was barely 2 months after Ginny had joined them that Voldemort struck his horrible blow to them. He had attacked the Burrow that June month. Killing all of Ginny's and Ron siblings. And their parents. To say that Ginny and Ron was devastated was an understatement. It had literally torn Harry apart to see Ginny go through that. Losing ones family, especially one such as the Weasleys would be hard for anyone to go through. But the Weasleys weren't the only family that was attacked that night. The Lovegoods and the Longbottoms had been attacked as well. Luna's father was found murdered in his own home. It was just luck that Luna had been staying with her then current boyfriend Neville Longbottom. Or so she thought until the Death Eaters had attacked him as well. Neville's Gran had died in the attack but not before she had rushed Neville and Luna into the fire and they had flooed to safety. It was then that Harry decided that Neville and Luna should join them. It actually appeared to be safer with Harry then to be out there alone. Or so he thought. The end of what should have been Harry's 7th year at Hogwarts was a ray of hope for Harry. It was then that they had finally destroyed one of Voldemort's Horcruxes. The famous Slytherin locket.

"Harry?" Harry heard Sirius voice which jerked him back into the present. "You alright?"

Harry looked over to Sirius and notice that the platform was less crowded then before. But the Weasleys were still there. He walked over to the carriage that the Weasleys were loading their luggage. Just then Percy piped up.

"I've got to go mum. I'm up the front. The prefects have got two compartments to themselves." Percy explained.

"Oh you're a PREFECT are you Percy." Said Fred, enhancing the word prefect. "You should have said something, we had no idea."

"Hang on I think I remember him mentioning something about it over the summer," George added. "Once maybe..."

"Or twice," Fred added.

"A Minute," George continued.

"All Summer." Fred ended.

"Oh shut up you two." Percy said. He sounded rather annoyed. Although Harry hadn't got a clue why, he thought the conversation was quite funny. Mrs Weasley turned to Percy and gave him a hug. Percy then walked away up to the prefect carriage leaving Harry with the rest of the Weasleys.

"Alright you two," Mrs Weasley said turning her attention towards the twins. "Behave yourselves this year please. You've got Ron and Harry joining so I want you to set a good example. Although I suppose the sky would fall down before either of you two do that. If I hear that either of you has gone and done something stupid like blown up a toilet or..."

"Blown up a toilet?" interrupted George "We've never blown up a toilet."

"Great idea though, thanks mum." Added Fred. And they jumped on board before Mrs Weasley could say anything.

Mrs Weasley turned her attention to Ron. She gave him a big hug before saying goodbye and Ron jumped into the carriage.

"I'll see you Harry, you really are a good boy aren't you. And don't let those twins get you into trouble." Mrs Weasley said to Harry.

Harry smiled an innocent smile and simply said. "I wouldn't do anything against the rules Mrs Weasley." Sirius and Ginny had problems stifling a laugh. He hugged Mrs Weasley before turning to Sirius. "See ya you old dog." Harry said hugging Sirius.

"Who are you calling old?" Sirius responded. Harry laughed before turning to Ginny.

Ginny looked down but Harry put his hand under her chin to get her face to look at him. A tear slowly rolled down her cheek. "Why are you crying Ginny?" Harry asked. But before he could get a reply she had thrown herself at Harry and hugged him, holding on for dear life. Harry simply chuckled and hugged her back. They broke apart and

Harry saw that Ginny's face had gone all red from embarrassment but Harry neither cared or worried about it.

"I'll miss you." Ginny whispered.

Harry wasn't too sure if he was meant to hear it or not but he still looked down at Ginny and replied. "I'm going to miss you too." Harry then heard the whistle of the train and the train started to move. Harry quickly ran to the open door and jumped onto the train just as it started to pick up steam. He turned around to see Ginny running to keep up and waving them goodbye.

"Don't cry Ginny, we'll send you loads of owls." Fred called out.

"Yeah, we'll send you a Hogwarts toilet seat." George said, adding to what Fred and just said.

"GEORGE!" Shouted Mrs Weasley.

"Only joking mum." Fred said.

Harry saw Ginny keep running and waving goodbye before the train turned a corner and Ginny and Mrs Weasley disappeared from sight. Harry walked to the empty compartment that Ron was in, put his trunk away in the holdings for it and sat down opposite Ron.

The train slowly left London whilst Ron and Harry played Exploding Snap and wizard chess. Even though Harry had years of practice Ron still trounced him. Around half past twelve the witch that pushed the lunch trolley along the train arrived asking if either of them would like to buy something. Harry immediately jumped off the chair and grabbed his sack of galleons. It was getting really low after the two trips to Diagon Alley. Although Harry thought, it wasn't like he needed the money at Hogwarts; it wasn't 'til his 3rd year that he would be allowed to visit the village. He bought everything off the trolley and chucked it down on the seat next to him.

"Hungry are you?" Ron asked.

"Just a bit, I didn't eat much at breakfast. I'm surprised your mum didn't get mad at me for not eating so much." Harry said.

"Yeah." Ron agreed.



Harry reached out for a chocolate frog and opened it. The frog suddenly jumped out of his hand and onto the window. The chocolate frog climbed up the window and jumped out of the gap caused by the top window being open.

"Ah rotten luck mate," Ron said "They only have 1 good jump in them to begin with."

Harry looked at the card to find out that just his luck, the first card he pulled out was Albus Dumbledore. He turned the card over and read aloud the description that came on the back of the card:

Albus Dumbledore, currently Headmaster of Hogwarts.

Considered by many the greatest wizard of modern times,

Professor Dumbledore is practically famous for his defeat

of the dark wizard Grindlewald in 1945, for the discovery of the

twelve uses of dragon's blood and his work on alchemy with his

partner Nicolas Flamel. Professor Dumbledore enjoys Chamber Music and Tenpin Bowling.

"Temping bowling." Ron said "What's temping bowling?" he asked.

"A muggle sport" Harry replied.

"Why would Dumbledore play a muggle sport?" Ron asked again.

"How am I meant to know?" Harry replied again.

Harry turned to the unopened pack of Bertie Botts Every Flavour Beans and picked a sweet and put it in his mouth and the taste of toast went down his throat. Harry also got coconut, naked bean and some other flavours.

As the now countryside scenery was flying past they heard a knock on the door and Neville Longbottom stood in the doorway. "Have any of you seen a toad?" he said tearfully. "I've lost mine and he keeps getting away from me."

Ron simply said no and went back to the sweets. Harry looked over to his friend and wondered how he could be so inconsiderate of other people's feelings.

"Sorry Neville but we haven't seen a toad. Why don't you sit down for a second to calm down before you go out looking again? You won't find anything with you all like this." Harry indicated the seat next to Ron. Neville quietly looked around, muttered thanks and sat down opposite Harry.

Ron slowly shifted his position so Neville had room to sit down and then continued the conversation Harry and Ron was having before Neville looked in. Harry was desperately trying to get Neville into the conversation but Neville was too upset about his toad to add to the conversation. After about half an hour there was a knock on the door and Hermione walked into the compartment.

"Have any of you seen... oh hey Neville have you found your toad yet then?" Hermione asked as soon as she noticed Neville.

The boy sniffed and then said "No but Harry here said that in the state I was in I wouldn't of spotted much anyway so he suggested I sit in with them to calm down a bit."

Hermione sat down next to Harry and looked at him. Her eyes did the routine in flicking to his forehead and back down which Harry had gotten used too.

"You're Harry Potter." Hermione started "I know all about you. I got a few extra books for background reading and you're in Modern Magical History and The Rise and Fall of the Dark Arts and Great Wizarding events of the twentieth Century."

"Really what did they say? I suspect all of old tosh. I mean I haven't even been interviewed by any of those books and none of them were there when my parents were killed so how would they know all that stuff about me?" Harry said looking at Hermione's reaction to the fact that books had failed her. She didn't really like it and Harry simply smiled.

Hermione noticed Ron's wand lying next to him. "Oh are you doing magic, let's see then?"

Ron looked confused at Hermione. Noticed her looking at his wand and then realised what she was on about. "Oh no, I don't really know any spells. I expect I'll learn some at Hogwarts though. I mean that is the whole point of going to school."

"Well." Hermione started "I've tried a few simple spells just for practise and they have all worked for me. Nobody in my family is magical, so it came as a surprise when I got my letter. But my parents were ever so pleased. I mean Hogwarts is meant to be the best school of witchcraft there is. I've learnt all our set books off by heart. The magical world is just fascinating."

Just then the compartment door slid open and Draco Malfoy and his two bodyguards stepped into the compartment.

"Is it true?" Malfoy asked. "They are saying Harry Potter is in this compartment. Is it you then?" Draco said turning to look at Harry.

"You are?" Harry asked even though he knew exactly who he was.

"Malfoy, Draco Malfoy." Malfoy replied. Ron coughed trying to hide a laugh he was having at Malfoy's name.

Malfoy looked over to Ron. "Think my name is funny do you? Don't have to ask who you are. Red hair, freckles, lots of brothers and a sister, a lot more then your parents could afford anyway. You must be a Weasley." Draco turned to look at Neville. "You are?"

"Neville" Neville answered rather timidly "Neville Longbottom."

Harry could have sworn he heard Malfoy say the words "Blood Traitors along with the Weasleys." before he turned his gaze to Hermione. "And You?"

"I'm Hermione Granger." Hermione said holding out her hand which Malfoy took.

"I never heard of the Granger family before." Malfoy said curiously shaking Hermione's hand

"No well you wouldn't really, my parents aren't magical so...." Hermione said before Draco gasped out loud and violently withdrew his hand.

"NEVER touch me again mudblood." Draco said. Unfortunately he just said the wrong thing. Ron and Neville jumped up and pointed their wands at Malfoy. "You'll soon find out that some wizarding families are much better than others Potter. You don't want to go making friends with the wrong sort. I can help you there." Malfoy finished holding out his hand to Harry.

Harry looked at Draco then stood up and walked towards him. He stretched out his hand and took Malfoy's. He heard a gasp come from Ron but Harry didn't care. All of a sudden he twisted Malfoy's arm to force him to turn then shoved him up against the half open door.

"I think I can tell who is the wrong sort are for myself Malfoy. I suggest you leave before you get yourself even more hurt than you already are." Harry said, anger and malice in his voice. Harry let go of Malfoy and he turned around, anger written all over his face.

"I'd be careful if I were you Potter," he spat out Harry's surname. "Unless you're a bit politer to your superiors you'll go the same way as your parents. They didn't know what was good for them either. You hang around with riff-raff like the Weasleys and this mudblood and it will rub off on you."

"Say that again and I swear I'll hurt you more than I already have." Harry said pointing his wand straight between the eyes of Malfoy.

"Oh you want a duel do you now Potter." Malfoy looked around the room, his gaze staying a little while longer on Hermione. "Come on guys, we're wasting our time with these Traitors." They slowly backed out of the compartment and Harry slammed the door closed and turned back to his seat and sat down.

"We'll be there soon." Hermione said looking out of the window. "You better change." she said to Harry, Ron and Neville.

"But what about Trevor?" Neville asked.

"Hermione?" Harry said "you said you tried some spells and they all worked for you. I've heard of the Accio spell before. It's the summoning spell. All you need to do is think of what you want and then say Accio blah blah blah. Maybe you could try it for Trevor?"

Hermione looked at Harry and then nodded. She went to the compartment door, drew out her wand and shouted "ACCIO TREVOR." She turned and looked at Harry waiting for an answer when all of a sudden Trevor flew into the compartment and landed next to Neville.

"Thanks Hermione." Neville said now happy that he had found his pet. Hermione looked out of the window before saying "We should be there soon. I'll leave you three to get dressed. She left the compartment as Ron, Neville and Harry put on their robes. All of a sudden a voice echoed through the train.

"We will be reaching Hogwarts in five minutes' time. Please leave your luggage on the train; it will be taken to the school separately."

Harry looked over to Ron and Neville to see they had both paled nervously at the thought of finally getting to Hogwarts. They left the compartment and joined the crowded corridor of students waiting to get off.

The train lurched as it came to a sudden stop and the people pushed their way out of doors and onto the platform. Harry felt the cold night air before a voice he hadn't heard in a very long time came shouting over the heads.

"Firs'-years! Firs'-Years! Over here!" Hagrid shouted over the crowded platform. His big beaming face visible to everyone. "C'mon follow me, any more firs'-years? Mind yer step, Now! Firs'-years follow me!"

Harry, Ron, Hermione and Neville all followed Hagrid down the steep and narrow path that lead to the lake and the boats the first years used to cross in. "Yeh'll get yer firs' sight o' Hogwarts in a sec," Hagrid called over his shoulder. "Jus' round this bend here."

There was a loud "ooooooh" as everyone saw Hogwarts come into view. The path had now opened up onto the shore of the lake and boats were floating near the waters edge.

"No more'n four to a boat." Hagrid called out as Harry and Ron climbed into one followed by Neville and Hermione. "Everyone in?" Hagrid shouted, looking to see if everyone had found a boat. Hagrid got into his own boat and shouted "FORWARD" and the boats started to glide towards the castle.

"Heads down." yelled Hagrid as they reached the cliff. They all bent their heads and the boats carried them into a hidden entrance covered by ivy. It took them into an underground harbour. They clambered out onto the pebbles and rocks of the shore. They walked along a pebble passageway in the rock following Hagrid's lantern until they came out onto the smooth, damp grass in front of the castle's great oak doors.

"Everyone here?" Hagrid called out. Hagrid raised his hand and knocked three times on the castle door before it swung open to reveal Professor McGonagall.

A/N heya guys next chappy for ya and I believe I have written it Farley quickly. Only took about 5 days I know it has been longer then that since update but I didn't start on it straight away. Anyway hope you enjoy it. I got a favour to ask I got 154 people on my alert list and 97 reviews. IF everyone that reads this story could plz plz pretty plz review then I could hit the 200 review mark. This would just make my day and bloody well make me want to write more. Which means you will get the next chap quicker. All you have to put is "good chap" if you don't know what to say and that would do. :P I love getting reviews. Anyway enough with the begging go hit that button next to it says review! P.s. some of you my beta reader including moaned how it was like me just copying straight from the book. Yes I realise this and yes some of next chapter is like it as well. The Reason... simply cause he's reliving time and he hasn't changed anything to cause those sorts of things from changing. As this year and defiantly next year progresses things will defiantly change therefore the speech will change. I aint one of these people who will copy chapter after chapter straight from the book. I warn the beginning of next chapter is similar to this but in future chapters speech will be different. It wont be straight out of the book. C ya. And review I want to hit the 200 mark.

Disclaimer: I Do Not Own Harry Potter

"The first-years, Professor McGonagall." Said Hagrid.

"Thank you Rubeus, I will take them from here." said Professor McGonagall. She pulled the door back and then led them across the entrance hall. The entrance to the great hall was to their right but she kept going and led them into a small empty chamber where all first years go to await for their sorting. They all crammed into the room, waiting for McGonagall to speak again.

"Welcome to Hogwarts." Professor McGonagall started. "The start of term banquet will begin shortly, but before you take your seats in the great hall, you will be sorted into your houses. The sorting is a very important ceremony because, while you are here, your house will be something like your family within Hogwarts. You will have classes with your house mates, sleep in the house dormitory and spend any free time in your house common room."

"The four houses are called Gryffindor, Hufflepuff, Ravenclaw and Slytherin." She said Slytherin with a slight disgust in her voice but not apparent enough for the students to hear. Harry was very lucky to pick it up. He'd learnt how to read someone when they were talking. Get to know what their real emotions were. With also a little help of Legilimency it was very difficult to lie to Harry and for him not to notice. "Each house has its own noble history and each has produced outstanding witches and wizards." continued Professor McGonagall.

"I suppose you can call Voldemort outstanding after all. Even though what he did was dark, it was a massive show of how much magic knowledge he had and power." Harry thought.

"While you are at Hogwarts, your triumphs will earn your house points; while any rule breaking will lose your house points. At the end of the year, the house with the most points is awarded the house cup, a great honour to your house. I hope that you will be a credit to whichever house becomes yours."

"The sorting ceremony will take place in a few minutes in front of the rest of the school. I suggest you all smarten yourselves up as much as you can while you are waiting." McGonagall said looking over to

Neville. "I shall return when we are ready for you. Please wait patiently."

"How do they sort us?" Neville asked.

"Some sort of test, I think. Fred said something about wrestling a troll. They wouldn't put us through that really would they? Not on our first day at school?" Ron said and then nervous chattering broke out. Hermione was reciting spells she had learnt and wondering which one she would need. Neville had gone ghostly white and Ron just looked scared out of his wits.

All of a sudden there were screams behind him and they all turned around to see about twenty ghosts come through the wall. They were arguing and if Harry's memory served him correct it was about Peeves. He really needed to talk to Peeves. This year was going to be so much fun.

The fat friar was speaking to Nearly Headless Nick. "Forgive and forget, I say, we ought to give him another chance."

"My dear friar, haven't we given Peeves all the chances he deserves? He gives us all a bad name and he isn't even really a proper ghost... I say, what are you all doing here?" Nick said.

Nobody answered but the fat friar guessed correctly. "NEW Students," he stated smiling down at them "About to be sorted I suppose?" Harry nodded slightly along with some other students. "Hope to see you in Hufflepuff. I'm the house ghost you know, used to be in it when I came here."

"Move along now the sorting ceremony is just about to start." McGonagall's voice echoed over the students heads towards the ghosts. The ghosts all moved towards the wall leading to the great hall and soon they had all gone through the opposite wall. "Now form a line." McGonagall said and Harry jumped in line with Ron in front of him and Neville behind him with Hermione just behind Neville. "Follow me please."

Harry walked behind Ron and followed him out of the chamber, back across the entrance hall and through the pair of large oak doors that led into the great hall. It had been a while since he had last seen this place as although the school was closed in the future after the



Hogwarts Train Massacre it was never actually flattened. And Harry made sure Voldemort could never get to it. He came to Hogwarts and put up his most powerful wards around the place. He made it so only he could come back if needed. Voldemort had tried of course but never succeeded in getting past Harry's defences.

Harry looked up to the ceiling and heard Hermione whisper "It's bewitched to look like the sky outside. I read about it in "Hogwarts; A History." Professor McGonagall led them up to the front so they were in front of the students with the teachers behind them. McGonagall quickly went into the small door just behind the teachers table and came back holding a stool and the sorting hat. She came to the middle of the row that the first years had made and put the stool down and then placed the sorting hat on top. The hall had gone quiet and Harry waited for the sorting hat's song and soon enough the rip at the bottom that the sorting hat used as a mouth opened and he started to sing the song he sang explaining the sorting.

"Oh you might not think I'm pretty

But don't judge on what you see

I'll eat my self if you can find

A smarter hat then me.

You can keep your bowlers black

Your top hats straight and tall,

For I'm the Hogwarts Sorting Hat

And I can cap them all.

There's nothing in your head

The sorting hat can see,

So try me on and ill will tell you

Where you ought to be.

You might belong in Gryffindor  
Where dwell the brave at heart  
Their daring, nerve and chivalry  
Set Gryffindors apart.  
You might belong in Hufflepuff,  
Where they are just and loyal,  
Those patient Hufflepuffs are true  
And unafraid of toil;  
Or yet in wise old Ravenclaw,  
If you've a ready Mind,  
Where those of wit and learning  
Will always find their kind;  
Or perhaps in Slytherin  
You'll make your real friends,  
Those cunning folk use any means  
To achieve their ends.

So put me on! Don't be Afraid!  
And don't get in a flap!  
You're in safe hands (though I have none)  
For I'm a thinking cap!"

(J.K. Rowling – Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone)

The great hall burst into applause and Harry looked to Ron who was laughing. "I will kill Fred." Ron said "I mean wrestling a troll. I'm going to kill him for that. All we need to do is put it on right? That's what it said right?"

Professor McGonagall stepped forward holding a long piece of parchment where she had the names of the students written down for the sorting.

"When I call your name out you will come and sit on the stool and put the hat on to be sorted." She said to the first years. "ABBOTT, HANNAH"

A blonde girl with pigtails walked out of the line, sat down on the stool and put the sorting hat on. After a couple of seconds the hat shouted "HUFFELPUFF" and she then went to sit next to the fat friar at the Hufflepuff table.

McGonagall continued down the list calling out names that Harry wasn't really interested in. until she came to the name "GRANGER, HERMIONE" Hermione ran to the stool and slammed the hat on her head.

After a moment the hat shouted out "GRYFFINDOR" and she ran to sit at the Gryffindor table. Soon it was Neville's turn and he walked nervously to the stool and put the hat on, still holding onto Trevor. After what seemed to Harry like an eternity the hat finally shouted out "GRYFFINDOR." Neville walked over to the Gryffindor table smiling happily.

"MALFOY, DRACO." Malfoy strutted forward and McGonagall went to put the hat on his head. The rim of the hat touched the blond hair of Draco and shouted out "SLYTHERIN" Some things never change, Harry thought. Although it would have been quite funny to see Draco being put into Hufflepuff. Soon there was hardly anyone left to be sorted and the time for Harry's sorting to happen.

"POTTER, HARRY" McGonagall called out. Whispers broke out across the hall as Harry walked over and sat down on the stool, putting up his Occlumency barriers so the sorting hat couldn't read his futures memories. All of a sudden he was enveloped in darkness as the sorting hat covered his eyes.

"Mm difficult, very difficult. Plenty of power, my goodness yes there is a lot of power and talent here. I'm surprised to learn that you're a first year and not a seventh year. With all this power I think Slytherin would be the best bet for you. Excellent place for you to go, definitely. SLY...." The Sorting hat had begun shouting out.

"STOP STOP STOP." Harry screamed in his mind. "Not Slytherin. Please not Slytherin I belong in Gryffindor not Slytherin."

"I beg to differ my young companion. Slytherin is an ideal place for you. Someone with so much power." The sorting hat said.

"Please Gideon." Harry could tell the hat was shocked at the use of his real name. Harry just smiled to himself before continuing. "Please just wait. Promise me what you learn from my mind and memories you will keep to your self. Promise me that."

"What are you talking about Mr. Potter I've already seen your memories. I know exactly where you belong. Although I am quite curious to where you learnt my proper name? I haven't been called that in well over fifteen hundred years."

"I learnt it from Godric." Harry said as he let his Occlumency barriers down. Harry heard what probably was a gasp from Gideon as he let the sorting hat go over his memories of the future.

"My my my, Harry. I haven't ever had a time traveller before. This is quite extraordinary. Well well well. I see what you go all huffed up about Slytherin. Not only were you in Gryffindor last time, but you are also the heir of Gryffindor. Last time I had an heir of one of the four founders was well..."

"Fifty years ago." Harry said. Which caused Gideon to gasp again.

"Fifty years? Who on earth was it fifty years ago that was an heir of a founder?" he asked.

"Name was Tom Marvolo Riddle, known today as Lord Voldemort." Harry replied.

"My, aren't you one for surprises Mr Potter. Tom Riddle heir of Slytherin... well that would make Hagrid innocent wouldn't it. My boy

just curious, do you know of your...err... shall I say abilities at Hogwarts now that you know you're an heir?"

"Yes Gideon I do but maybe we should talk later. There are still more people to be sorted and I have too much to talk about today. But just one more thing. Ronald Weasley, he belongs in Gryffindor and also Ginny Weasley..."

"Ah yes the wife, what is it with Potters and red heads?" Gideon asked. "Very well I shall do as you wish. Good luck. GRYFFINDOR!" Gideon shouted. And McGonagall lifted the sorting hat revealing the great hall was applauding whilst the twins were dancing about screaming "We got Potter, We got Potter." Harry walked over to the Gryffindor table and sat down next to Neville and opposite Hermione. There were only 3 people left.

Turpin, Lisa became a Ravenclaw and then it was Ron's turn. Ron sat down on the stool and the hat was on his head no more than five seconds before it called out "GRYFFINDOR" and Ron made his way to the table and sat down next to Harry. Zabini, Blaise was made a Slytherin and then Professor McGonagall came and took the stool and Gideon away.

Albus got to his feet, beaming at the students. "Welcome!" he began "Welcome to the new year at Hogwarts. Before we begin our magnificent banquet, I would like to say a couple of words. And they are Nitwit! Blubber! Oddment Tweak! Enjoy your feast.

All of a sudden the plates in front of Harry became full of food and the lunch he had on the train seemed liked years ago. Harry dug in ravenously as he listened to the conversations happening.

"That looks good. Shame I can't eat." Said Nearly Headless Nick who had come floating over to where they were sitting. "Oh forgive me I forgot to introduce myself. I'm Sir Nicholas de Mimsy-Popington, at your service. Resident Gryffindor Ghost."

"Nearly Headless Nick! My brother told me about you." Ron said turning his concentration away from food, which to Harry, was a shock to him.

"I would prefer Sir Nicholas de Mims..."

"Nearly Headless?" Asked Seamus.

"Yes" Nick answered, though it was obvious he didn't like this conversation at the moment. "Watch." Nick seized his left ear and pulled and his head swung onto his shoulder, causing some looks from the first years. He flipped his head back on and said. "So, new Gryffindor comrades. I hope you're up to our standard. We need all the help we can get to wrestle the house championship off Slytherin. They have won it for the past six years. I would love to wipe the bloody baron's face in it if we win this year." Harry just laughed at this and went back to eating.

Everyone had finished the main course by now so the food disappeared and was replaced by loads of different puddings. The conversation all of a sudden changed to families. "I'm half and half. My dad's a muggle, ma mum's a witch. Kind of a nasty surprise for him when he found out. She didn't tell him 'til after they were married." This caused Harry to laugh as well, he really enjoyed being back to the place he first called home.

"Well I suppose everyone knows my story. My dad was pureblood. My mum was muggle born. No big funny thing there." Harry said entering the conversation. The others just looked at him smiling sadly and then continued the conversation.

"I'm muggleborn, neither of my parents were a witch or wizard." Hermione said "What about you Neville?"

"Pureblood. But I am so close to being a squib. I didn't show any magic until my uncle dropped me out of the highest window in our house and I bounced. My family was so happy. They thought I was a squib for so long. They were so happy when I got my letter. My uncle bought me my toad."

Harry looked over to Hermione who was now talking to Percy about lessons. "I do hope they start soon. We've got so much to learn. I'm especially interested in transfiguration. Turning one thing into the other. I just find it fascinating." Harry smiled. Typical Hermione.

Harry looked over at the head table and looked straight into the eyes of Snape. The hatred that shook through Harry's body was just enormous. There was a mighty CRACK of glass as the cup Seamus was holding smashed into bits. Harry looked shocked as everyone

else. Harry had just done accidentally magic. "Damn Snape." Harry thought. "I'm going to make his life hell from now till 6th year." Harry felt someone trying to enter his mind and he used his magic to sense where it was coming. Harry looked around and came to look at the turban of Quirrell's. Voldemort was trying to use Legilimency to get into his mind. Harry immediately slammed up his Occlumency shields and Harry could swear he saw Quirrell wince with pain.

Finally, once the puddings were gone and the plates clear of crumbs Dumbledore stood up. "Ahem" Dumbledore started which cause the hall to fall silent. "Just a few more words now we are all fed and watered. I have a few start-of-term notices to give out. First years please note that the forest is forbidden to all students. A few older students should bear that in mind also." He said glancing at the twins and then over to Harry.

"Hey, I haven't started here yet and he thinks I'm going to break rules." Harry thought "I'm hurt by that really I am. Now ways to break school rules without Dumbledore knowing....."

"I have also been asked by Mr Filch, the caretaker, to remind you all that no magic should be used between classes in the corridors. Quidditch trials will be held in the second week of term. Anyone who is interested in playing for their house teams should contact Madam Hooch. And finally, I must say that this year, the third floor corridor on the right hand side is out of bounds to all those who do not wish to die a very painful death.

"And now before we go to our nice warm beds let's sing the school song!" cried Dumbledore. Dumbledore flicked his wand and a long golden ribbon flew out and twisted itself into words. "Everyone pick their favourite tune and OFF WE GO!" and the school sung:

"Hogwarts, Hogwarts Hoggy Warty Hogwarts,

Teach us something please,

Whether we are old and bald,

Or young with scabby knees,

Our heads could do with filing,

With some interesting stuff,  
For now there bare and full with air,  
Dead flies and bits of fluff,  
So teach us things worth knowing,  
Bring back what we've forgot,  
Just do your best, well do the rest,  
And learn until our brains all rot."

(J.K. Rowling – Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone)

Harry finished his tune rather quickly but enjoyed listening to the twins. When they finally managed to finish their song, with the help of Dumbledore conducting their last few lines, the whole school clapped.

"Ah the sound of music." Dumbledore said. "A magic beyond all that we learn here. And now, bedtime. Off you trot!" There was a loud scraping of chairs as everyone got up and started walking to the entrance. The first year Gryffindors followed Percy up the great marble staircase and through secret passageways. Harry thought he knew a quicker way but that contained secret passageways that only himself, the twins and the Marauders knew. They came out of the last staircase that led onto the floor which had the entrance to the Gryffindor tower. They walked along the corridor a bit before they came to floating walking sticks blocking the way.

"Peeves." Whispered Percy "A poltergeist, I haven't got a clue why Dumbledore puts up with him. I would throw him out of this castle if it was my decision." Percy slightly raised his voice and said "Peeves – show yourself." Harry heard a loud raspberry sound and he was having difficulty not to laugh.

"I will go get the Bloody Baron, Peeves." Percy threatened. There was a loud pop as Peeves the poltergeist came into view.

"Ickle firsties. So much fun I can have." Peeves said swooping down on them and everyone apart from Harry ducked. Peeves came to a



stand still in front of Harry. "So the rumours are true. Famous Harry Potter has come to Hogwarts. So much fun I can have pranking..." he trailed off as Harry just smiled at him.

"Hello Peeves. Pleased to meet your acquaintance." Harry said stunning all present. "Tell me how the Bloody Baron is these days? I heard he's the only one who can control you.

"No one can control old Peeves sir. I am a free spirit!" Peeves crackled.

"Really, well, I will have to test that theory of yours soon Peeves." Harry replied. Peeves just looked at Harry then dropped the walking sticks on top of Neville's head and zoomed out through the wall.

"Right, well, follow me." Percy said as he led the Gryffindors to the end of the corridor where the portrait of the fat lady hung at the entrance of the Gryffindor tower.

"Password?" the fat lady said.

"Caput Draconis." Percy said the password and the portrait swung forward to reveal the hole in the wall to get to the Gryffindor common room. When they all climbed through and were standing in the middle of the common room Percy directed the first years to their dorms. Harry slowly tracked up the spiral staircase and into his bedroom and then flopped down onto his bed. He heard the others do the same and soon heard the snores of his room mates sleeping.

Harry crept out of his bed and opened up his trunk; he grabbed the marauders map, the invisibility cloak, some parchment and a quill and headed down to the common room. He sat by the fire in his favourite chair he had come to know and started writing a letter to Ginny.

Ginny,

Hope you don't miss your brothers too much. Hogwarts is great, the map your brothers gave me is brilliant. I'll show it to you when you come next year. Hope you're having fun without me. I hope to come home around Christmas so we can see each other then. Write back. And before I forget to write it, I'm in Gryffindor with Ron.

Your friend

Harry

Harry folded up the parchment and then grabbed the marauders map and headed out of the common room, intent on getting Hedwig to deliver the letter. He walked past sleeping portraits and up the tower that lead to the Owlery. He climbed the last steps and came out at last on the flat landing with owls. He looked around and noticed Hedwig sleeping halfway up on the left hand side. He slowly walked over and woke her up.

"Sorry girl, but could you take this letter to Ginny. I promised I would write to her." Hedwig sat patiently for him to tie the letter to her leg and then she jumped onto Harry's arm. He led her over to the open window. She gave him a quick affectionate nibble on his ear and then she took off with the letter.

He slowly walked back down the staircase and headed back towards the common room. He looked at the marauders map and two names popped out at him. Peeves and Dumbledore. Dumbledore was in a disused classroom and Peeves was bouncing along the 5th floor corridor. Harry turned in the opposite direction and headed towards where Dumbledore was. Harry realised that he hadn't spoke to the headmaster in ages and he needed to know what would be happening this year.

Harry managed to avoid Filch and Mrs Norris and soon came upon the classroom that Harry now recognised as the classroom that the Mirror of Erised was in. Harry then realised that he didn't have his invisibility cloak with him. Harry just chuckled to himself. Ah well he thought, Dumbledore isn't the only one that can turn invisible at will.

All of a sudden Harry vanished and to any onlookers they would say that the hallway outside the classroom was deserted. Harry slowly opened the door and noticed Dumbledore himself standing in front of the mirror with the Philosophers Stone on a table close by. Dumbledore was muttering to himself whilst throwing spells at the mirror. Unfortunately Harry couldn't hear what the words were. Harry walked into the classroom and sat down on top of a table and watched Dumbledore at work. After a further fifteen minutes and still no prevail of getting the stone into the mirror Dumbledore spoke.

"You know Harry rather than sitting there I wouldn't mind some help."

"How is it that you know everything?" Harry asked. "It's not like I even have my invisibility cloak on so you can't see through that." Harry said becoming visible to all in the room.

"Although I am very touched by your compliments it is only a stupid person who claims they know everything there is to know." Albus said wisely. "Now is there any chance you can help me here with this stone. I can't seem to get it to work."

"I don't know how you got it to work. All I know is that only a person who wanted the stone. Want it, but not use it could get it out of the mirror. How you actually got it in the mirror to start with, sir, is unknown to me." Harry explained.

"Harry, thank you." Dumbledore said. "You have just solved my problem. That is an excellent idea. One which would properly have had me up half the night and into the early morning before I thought of that."

"Pity." Harry said. "I might have enjoyed watching you fuss over it." He finished with a smile.

"So I guess your wandering around at night and miraculously bumping into me is not just coincidence." Dumbledore said as the stone which now had different coloured spells dissolved itself into the mirror.

"Not really I'm afraid." Harry said deciding now was the time to be serious for once. "I'm here to talk about what happens. The sole reason why I came back in time. I won't go over all the details. However I do suggest we have some sort of meeting at the start of each year so I can explain to you what happens in that year."

"I quite agree Harry." Dumbledore said nodding his head. "And as you held no surprise about the Philosopher's Stone, I take it that it has something to do with that."

"Quite, surely you noticed the break in at Gringotts. Lucky Hagrid got to the stone before Quirrell." Harry said.

Dumbledore stood for a moment then sighed. "Why is it always Defence Against the Dark Arts teachers? They never last long and some people think that's it's cursed. So hard to get teachers for it now. And why did Voldemort choose Quirrell of all people?" Dumbledore asked.

"One thing I am afraid to tell you which you won't like is that the job is indeed cursed. Surely you noticed how hard it was to keep teachers who taught the subject here after you turned down Riddle for the job." Harry said.

"Dumbledore's eyes starting twinkling like mad at what Harry just said. "Is there anything you don't know about Voldemort?" He asked.

"Well come to think about it, I never worked out what his favourite colour was, not for definite. It might be black as that's what he makes the Death Eaters wear, but honestly I have no clue." Harry said trying to hold back a laugh. "Back to your second question. Why he chose Quirrell, because he was gullible, foolish. He believed the lies Tom told him. Quirrell was easy to manipulate. 'He was easy to bend to my will' as Voldemort once put it. Although I can guarantee he did choose to do this, Voldemort isn't forcing him too. Voldemort managed to convince him that's all."

"I don't particularly like the fact that Quirrell is so close to the students Harry." Dumbledore said frowning. "Is there anything we can do now?"

"Afraid not" Harry replied. "Getting Quirrell to leave now would tell Voldemort that we knew something. I cannot risk Voldemort finding out that I'm from the future." Harry said walking over to the mirror to look into it. Harry gasped out loud which caused Dumbledore to frown.

"Harry, What do you see? I guess as you haven't asked about the mirror in particular and the way you described how I got the stone in the mirror and how you can get it out you understand what it does." Dumbledore said with worry in his voice. If Harry had already dealt with the mirror before then what was there to be shocked about at what he was seeing.

"I was expecting to see my family sir. My parents." Harry said slowly. "And I do it's just that... I see Ginny as well. Holding a baby, a baby girl." Harry finished, a tear falling down his cheek.

This shocked Dumbledore, he knew that Ginny was his best friend but he never knew that Harry felt like this about her though. He of course knew that Ginny had a crush on Harry from when he attended Harry's birthday party. But he never knew Harry felt the same way. "I never knew you had a crush on young Ms. Weasley." Dumbledore said.

"I don't." Harry replied. "It isn't a crush. And it isn't Ms. Weasley. It's Mrs. Potter, she's my wife and I love her."

Dumbledore stood looking at Harry. "I understand now why you wanted her with you this year. It's difficult to not be with the one you love. Although I am confused. It is common knowledge to everyone that has met her that Ginny has only eyes for you. Why not just go out with her now?" Dumbledore asked.

"A couple of reasons. The main one is simply because it's just a crush. Not real love. I want to wait until it is real love before we go out. I couldn't bear to think that if we go out now and she doesn't fall in love with me... that's one thing I definitely don't want to change this time. The fact that she falls in love with me." Harry explained.

"So when and how does she fall in love with you?" Dumbledore asked. "I don't mean to pry and if you don't want to say..."

"End of my second year, her first." Harry interrupted him. Turning his head away from the mirror to look at him. "Although I'll save the...err, shall I say details to next year. We did agree one year at a time did we not?" Harry said.

"We did indeed." Dumbledore said with a slight nod of his head. "Harry it is late and I believe that you should have some sleep before tomorrow and your lessons."

"We've got some more to discuss first." Harry said. "Voldemort's Horcruxes. I need to tell you what they are and where they are so you can destroy them before my fourth year. I want to be able to kill him when I meet him in the graveyard."

"Umm, graveyard Harry?" Dumbledore asked. Harry gave him a look. "Ah of course, one year at a time, yes right then. Name the Horcruxes then Harry and where they are and I will get some people I trust or myself to get them and destroy them before your 4th year.

"One is Voldemort's pet snake Nagini. That I will destroy the night that he comes back. He hasn't got his 6th one yet however Nagini will become his 6th before that incident. Another is Marvolo Gaunt's ring. This should be found at Gaunts House in Little Hangleton. Another, Salazar Slytherin's locket, which incidentally will be found at number 12 Grimmauld Place. A diary of Riddle's, this I will be able to destroy myself next year." Harry suddenly looked back at the memory of Ginny lying at the feet of the Salazar Slytherin statue. Harry still hadn't decided whether he was going to change that or not. "Helga Hufflepuff's cup, this will be found at Tom Riddle's old orphanage. And last but not least Ravenclaw's engagement ring. This should be found at Borgins and Burkes." Harry said rattling off exactly where each Horcrux should be.

Dumbledore stood there and slowly took it all in. "Wow, I've got to say I wasn't expecting this tonight. But thank you, now off to bed. It's classes tomorrow and we want you wide awake for those don't we."

"I could just skip them I suppose...." Harry suggested.

"Sorry Harry, you're the one who decided to relive it. So reliving it is exactly what you should do. And not going to classes will surely stop you from making friends, especially with Ms Granger and Mr Longbottom."

Harry just stood there looking at the headmaster. "That is getting freaky. I mean we only just got here, how can you do that? Find the information so fast?"

"Headmaster's secret, Harry." Dumbledore said, the twinkle in his eye coming back full force. "Now off you trot." Harry walked towards the door and with a last glance back he left the room.

Harry walked down the corridor and around the corner to come face to face with Peeves.

"Oh look at this." He crackled "A student out of bed. I should call Filch you know. It is against the rules to be out this late."

"Then go tell the headmaster, he is just down that corridor." Harry said indicating the way he just came. Peeves looked at him but didn't move.

"Well I see we are not going to the headmaster. Maybe we can talk for a while." Harry said who continued walking down the corridor. Peeves reluctantly fell in pace next to Harry.

"Sir wishes me to stop the pranking?" Peeves said with sadness in his voice.

"Oh no, nothing of the sort Peeves." Harry said. "I want you to be my spokesman to the ghosts in this castle."

"Me sir?" Peeves said obviously shocked.

"Yes Peeves you." Harry Replied. "You can prank anyone anytime, apart from the first of September. Apart from that you have a free reign to prank anyone and everyone...especially the Slytherins. But I want you as the spokesman of the ghosts and portraits. I will get them to let you join the feasts at the beginning of the year and at Halloween and Christmas. In turn you will be their spokesman. Everything the ghosts or portraits have trouble with tell me about it. If I want the ghosts to do anything you will be the one who I will come to. Good enough terms Peeves?" Harry finished. If this worked then he truly will be in control of Hogwarts. He didn't want to take anything away from Dumbledore but if this worked it would be great in future years.

"Agreed sir." Peeves said.

"Oh and no sir." Harry said "When ever I am around other people you will treat me as any other student apart from the actually pranking. Got it?"

"Yes... err. Harry?" Peeves said, unsure what to call him.

Harry simply nodded and turned the next corner to see the portrait of the Fat lady, which automatically opened before he said the password. He stopped in front of the portrait, waiting for it to close again. After a minute the portrait closed to reveal a very confused Fat Lady.

"You're not going in?" she asked.

"I am but I don't want you ever to open up like that again to me. I want you to always ask for the password." Harry said annoyed. If she did that when they weren't alone... his cover of being an heir of Gryffindor could be blown.

"Okay sir." The fat lady said.

"AND don't call me sir, its Harry." Harry hissed through his teeth. "Spread the word, unless I say different you are to treat me no differently to another person. Now I'm tired and want to go to bed. Caput Draconis." With that the portrait swung open and Harry entered the common room, went up the stairs that led to his dorm and through the door hung with the sign. "First Years" and fell onto his bed. He got changed into his PJ's and got into his bed. Within a minute he had fallen asleep.

A/N: Heya guys sorry about the wait I had bike lessons and test all last week so I really couldn't do any work on this. Next chapter will be first lessons and especially lesson with Snape... won't that be interesting. C ya and hope you had fun reading. I have already said this once but got no reply so I'll say it one more time otherwise I'm just going to leave it. I already have a layout in what I want to happen each year, however if anyone has got any ideas they thing might be good or just anything they wish to see happen in this story (apart from Harry and Ginny kissing :P that will come I promise) review and tell me and ill see if I might be able to fit it in. but I don't promise I will. Okay enough of me c ya guys



Disclaimer: I do not own Harry Potter

Thankfully the Fat Lady had spread the word around the castle so nothing out of the ordinary happened. Although there was a close call where Ron was just about to step into a trick step halfway up a set of stairs. Harry had shouted at him to stop which he did but unfortunately a ghost was passing by. She stopped and turned at Harry asking him what he wanted. This earned him some funny looks as ghosts normally don't take orders from students. Harry managed to act like he didn't have a clue what she was on about and no one was the wiser. Harry was glad that Hermione was part of their group as planned, she was very useful with homework if Ron got stuck. Harry of course knew all of it so never got stuck, but sometimes acted like he did in order not to draw attention to himself. All Harry needed to work on now was getting her to open up, become the Hermione which he knew would save all of their lives at least one time in the future. Neville however was the surprise.

Harry of course wanted to become friends with Neville, he somewhat felt guilty over his and Luna's deaths, well he felt guilty over everyone's death, but what he felt the most guilty about is that he never knew Neville, not really. He of course knew some stuff about him but not as much as he knew about Ron, Hermione or Ginny. He even knew less about Luna. So becoming really good friends with him and Neville now joining in with Hermione and Ron it was all better. Especially the fact that Ron was starting to be friendly to Hermione as well.

Harry had received a reply from the letter he sent to Ginny a couple of days later saying that she wasn't expecting a letter so soon and went off in her reply about how glad she was that he and Ron had made Gryffindor. Ever so slowly Harry managed to settle down into the Hogwarts way of life. After being away from it for so long it felt strange being back but comforting at the same time.

Harry had to be very careful in classes. He had decided to act dumb rather than intelligent. He would draw less attention to himself if he was dumb than if he was bright. He didn't want any more attention than he already got. And that was going to be very hard, all the time he heard whispers around him but he knew they would soon die down. However one thing he could be good about was knowing the way around the castle. If ever Ron, Hermione or Neville would bring it up all he had to say was he looked it up on the Marauders map.

and they wouldn't ask any more questions. The first week came and went and soon it was Friday and tomorrow would be the weekend. Unfortunately, he had lessons today and he was not sure with whether he was looking forward to it or dreading it. Potions and Transfiguration.

Harry sat next to Ron with Hermione and Neville opposite him. "What have we got today?" Neville asked looking up from his porridge.

"Double Potions," answered Hermione, "and then Transfiguration, all before lunch."

"Yeah double potions with Snape." Ron said "They say he favours the Slytherins, we can see if it's true now."

"I very much doubt it Ron. Snape is a teacher, I don't think he would lower himself to favouritism." Hermione said.

"I wouldn't be too sure Hermione." Harry said knowing far too well what Snape was like. They all finished breakfast then started to move towards the dungeons where Snape held the lessons. Harry, Ron, Hermione and Neville walked into the classroom, which was in the dungeons so the classroom wasn't very warm. They made their way to the back of the room and sat down. Hermione had moaned at this at the start of the week but as Ron, Harry and Neville were her only friends she soon stopped moaning and just went with it. This however didn't stop her from trying to answer every question.

Soon everyone was seated and waiting for Professor Snape to come in. And come he did. He walked in with the usual swagger that Harry was used to and came to the front of the class. He, like all the other teachers started by taking the register. Harry knew what was coming next and waited patiently for Snape to get to his name.

"Ah yes," Snape said "Harry Potter, our new – celebrity. You're definitely here, we can't miss you with that big head of yours really now can we? Tell me how is life with Mr Black? Has he taught you how to kill people yet?" Snape said with a snigger. "Thirteen people with one single curse. Impressive."

Harry decided to throw caution to the wind and give as good as he got, which Harry thought with the intelligence of these insults he

wouldn't even have to break a sweat. "Maybe, maybe he didn't need to teach me sir..." Harry said leaving the ending hanging to let all people make up the ending using their own imagination. He often found that when speaking to Death Eaters you often needed to threaten them and they could come up with better ways of torture than Harry could. The human mind is its own weapon if you know what buttons to press. He knew that would get him into trouble and probably not do him any good but the look on Snape's face was definitely worth it.

Snape looked like he had something stuck in his throat but soon recovered. "10 points from Gryffindor." he barked "Tell me what would I get if I added powdered root of asphodel to an infusion of wormwood?"

"A sleeping potion so powerful it is known as the draught of the living death." Harry said remembering the answers Snape told him the first time around.

Snape looked absolutely furious that Harry knew the answer, "Where would you look if I told you to find me a bezoar?"

Harry acted like he was thinking, "In the stomach of a goat sir." He replied "But as there are no goats in the village of Hogsmeade I would say the student's potion cupboard or your personal one sir."

This really did rile up Snape's anger. "WHAT, Potter, is the difference between monkshood and wolfsbane?"

Harry smiled a little which infuriated Snape even more. "Do you want to add aconite as well to that list?" Harry saw Snape go red with fury so he decided to answer the question. "Nothing sir they are the same plant."

"Five points from Gryffindor for your cheek Potter." Harry stayed looking at Snape, anger flowing through his body. "Damn Snape." Harry thought as he continued to look at the potions master.

"Well..." Snape said all of a sudden. "Why aren't you copying all of that down? Five points from each Gryffindor for failing to take notes." Snape said as he sat down at his desk. With a flick of his wand Snape put up notes on the board and sat down as the class started write down the notes.

"That's so unfair why didn't he take any from Slytherin?" Ron said.

"Ten points from Gryffindor for talking Mr Weasley." Snape said over the class as they were writing down the notes.

After they all copied it down Snape raised from his table to address the class.

"You are here to learn the subtle science and exact art of potion making." Snape said "as there is little foolish wand waving in this class in this class many of you will hardly believe this to be magic. I don't expect you will really understand the beauty of the softly simmering cauldron with its shimmering fumes, the delicate power of liquids that creep through human veins, bewitching the mind, ensnaring the senses... I can teach you how to bottle fame, brew glory and even put a stopper in death – if you aren't as big a bunch of dunderheads as I usually teach. Now get into pairs and follow the instructions on the board to make the potion that cures boils."

Harry and Neville got together and started on the potion. They were next to Ron and Hermione. Soon all of the students were working around their cauldrons with some potions the right colour and some that definitely weren't. Harry looked at the instructions to see what he needed to do next. It told him to add the porcupine quills after taking the cauldron off the fire. Harry went and put the dragon hide gloves on to not burn his hands and when he turned around Neville was putting in the quills.

"Neville, NO!" Harry hissed causing Neville to drop the quills; they bounced on the edge of the rim of the cauldron before falling harmless onto the table. He looked up to see Snape sneer at Harry before walking over to where they were sitting.

"Shouting out disturbing the class Mr. Potter." Snape sneered. "Another five points from Gryffindor and if you do one more thing to break the school rules or do something wrong you will be in detention faster then you can say Quidditch."

Harry just sat seething. He knew Snape to be bad but he was never this bad. After a further hour of having to listen to Snape's comments and having a further twenty points taken of Gryffindor, Harry Ron Neville and Hermione walked up the stairs to come to the

3rd floor where Professor McGonagall held lessons. Once seated inside McGonagall then treated them to her own speech just like her first lesson explaining how by the end of the lesson she hoped that everyone could turn their match into a needle whilst Hermione, who of course managed to do this in there first lesson, went on to different things. By the end of the lesson everyone, excluding Harry, managed to do it. Including Neville with some help from Hermione. Harry hadn't been paying attention to the time and now it was too late to do anything about it.

"You didn't even try." Hermione hissed at Harry once the lesson ended. The truth was he didn't. The past week he tried at nothing because really he knew that if he tried he would get it straight away and he didn't want to be noticed. Well not so much noticed as he already got for being the boy who lived.

Finally they reached the great hall for lunch and sat down in their usual spots at the Gryffindor table.

"What are we doing this afternoon?" Harry asked. Knowing Hermione it would be studying and Ron would argue all afternoon.

"How about we do some exploring, walk around the grounds." Neville said. Everyone agreed and soon the four of them were out in the grounds wandering about. Soon they came in view to Hagrid cabin near the forest.

"Who live in there?" Ron asked.

"Hagrid, The Gamekeeper." Harry said without thinking.

"You know that because...?" Hermione asked.

"Oh err..." Harry began fully aware of Neville, Ron and Hermione all looking at him. "Dumbledore told me."

"You speak to Dumbledore often?" Hermione asked again.

"What the hell is this, twenty questions about the life of Harry James Potter?" Harry asked getting concerned about where she was taking this.

"Never mind." Hermione answered sounding rather bothered about how rude Harry just was.

"Sorry Hermione it was just out of the blue that's all." Harry said silently, asking for forgiveness.

Hermione looked at Harry and then nodded her response, as the four of them got closer to Hagrid's Hut; quite suddenly Hagrid himself came out.

"Well 'ello. What brings you lot down 'ere?" Hagrid asked looking at the four of them suspiciously.

"We were just walking around the grounds." Ron said "We got the afternoons off and we really didn't have much else to do."

"Ah well, as you're 'ere maybe you could help me move some of these rocks 'round? I'm a startin' to grow the pumpkins so they're ready for Halloween but the rocks are in the way." All of them nodded and started to walk towards Hagrid's pumpkin patch. They spent the rest of the afternoon laughing and enjoying themselves. About three hours later they trudged into Hagrid's hut dirty from the gardening they were all doing and sat around the table whilst Hagrid poured them drinks.

"So." Hagrid said "How's your brother Charlie?" he asked Ron.

"You knew Charlie?" Ron asked.

"Course I know him. Great with animals, I 'ear he works with dragons now in Romania?" Hagrid said looking at Ron.

"Yeah he studies dragons out there in a reserve. My parents are actually thinking of going over there for Christmas." Ron said.

"Ginny going with them?" Harry asked.

"Who's Ginny?" Neville asked.

"My sister. Who has a huge crush on Harry." Ron said.

"Harry's Girlfriend?" Hermione said now looking at Harry.

"Err no." Harry said not looking at anyone.

"Oh. You don't feel the same way?" Hermione asked.

"I'm only eleven, she's only ten...not old enough for boyfriend and girlfriend." Harry said.

"So when you two are older..." Hermione said.

"Just leave it." Harry said "So back to point, is Ginny going with them?"

"Yeah. I mean my parents can't leave her all alone for Christmas so yeah she's going with them. " Ron said.

"So how'er yer lessons?" Hagrid asked changing the subject.

"Oh they're brilliant, so much more than I thought they were..." and then Hermione was off explaining all their lessons to Hagrid. Harry looked down on the table and noticed a cutting from the Daily Prophet.

## GRINGOTTS BREAK-IN LATEST

Investigations continue into the break-in at Gringotts on 31 July, widely believed to be the work of dark wizards or witches unknown.

Gringotts' goblins today insisted that nothing has been taken. The vault that was searched had in fact been emptied that very same day.

"But we're not telling you what was in there, so keep your noses out if you know what's good for you." Said a Gringotts spokesgoblin this afternoon.

(J.K. Rowling – Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone, pg 105)

"Someone tried to rob Gringotts on my birthday." Harry said aloud, causing everyone to stop what they were doing.

"Rob Gringotts..." Neville said "That's meant to be impossible."

"Yeah it's meant to be the safest place in Brittan isn't it?" Harry asked.

"That it is Harry." Hagrid agreed "No place safer in the world I reckon 'cept maybe 'ogwarts o' course."

"Why do you say that Hagrid?" Hermione asked.

Hagrid looked away muttering about something which Harry couldn't hear. Harry looked over to the others who looked very confused. Excellent, the little they suspect me to know stuff the better, Harry thought. Some twenty minutes later the five of them said goodbye and headed up to the castle for tea. Harry hoped that he could get the others interested in this. It would be a little too weird if all of a sudden he demanded them to go to the third floor corridor with them knowing nothing about anything. Harry's stomach grumbled and his thoughts turned to dinner as they walked up to the castle and into the great hall.

After dinner the four of them trudged up to the Gryffindor common room. When they got there they noticed a sign saying that flying lessons would start Thursday next week. And like last time around they were having them with Slytherin.

"I'm not really looking forward to flying." Neville said. Come the Wednesday night before they would be having the lessons. "I've never been on one, Gran never let me." Hermione was sitting in an armchair reading Quidditch Through the Ages, trying to get pointers as to exactly how to fly. This was one thing you could never learn out of a book.

"There has to be something in here that will help." Hermione muttered skimming through the book.

"Hermione leave it." Harry said "Flying is one of those things where you can't learn from a book, you have to learn it practically, that's why the class is outdoors and not in a classroom." Hermione looked up and silently nodded before going up to bed. Harry, deciding to do the same trudged up the spiral staircase and into his dormitory. He looked over to the open window to see Hedwig with a letter. He walked over and saw Ginny's handwriting. He ripped it open and read the letter.



Harry

I just got conformation that we are going to Romania for Christmas this year. I bet it will be really cold. But this also means we won't properly see each other till the summer now. Wish you could come with us but we just can't afford it. Hope you're having a wonderful time at Hogwarts. Can't wait till next year and I'll be there with you.

Love

Ginny

P.S I just got a toilet seat from Fred and George, mums Furious

Harry smiled at the letter as he put it at the bottom of his trunk with all of the other letters he had received from her. He really wanted to see Ginny over Christmas. He truly missed her. So as Harry sank down onto his bed to fall asleep he began thinking the start of a plan that will allow him some time with Ginny over the holidays.

The next week passed and Thursday morning found Harry, Hermione, Ron and Neville sitting at their normal places at the Gryffindor table nervously awaiting the afternoon where they would be having their flying lesson. This morning however was double transfiguration. All of a sudden the owls came in and a brown owl dropped a package in front of Neville which he opened. Inside was a class ball with white smoke in it.

"Wow Gran's got me a Remembrall." Neville exclaimed "Gran knows I forget things, so she sent me this. You see if you hold it like this and the smoke turns red you've forgotten something. If it stays white you remembered everything."

Harry looked at the Remembrall and searched through his memories of this happening last time. He had a nagging feeling that it turned red last time but this time it didn't. All of a sudden the Remembrall was snatched out of his hands by Malfoy.

"Look at this; it should of turned red for you Neville. You've clearly forgotten how to act like a pureblood. Hanging around people like this, but then again with parents like yours I'm not surprised, well shall I say grandmother like yours. Your parents aren't exactly there if you know what I mean. Maybe if you give this to your parents..."

all of a sudden Malfoy was punched in the face by Neville. Malfoy went to retaliate but Harry was too quick. He grabbed Malfoy's arm and pushed down on the table, spilling a cup of orange juice over the table.

"I seem to remember telling you on the train Malfoy to leave my friends alone." Harry said his voice full of malice. "Maybe you didn't understand me the first time so I'll give you another shot, leave me and my friends alone!"

"MR POTTER." Came Professor McGonagall's voice over the great hall. Harry looked up to see Snape, Dumbledore and McGonagall hurrying over to the Gryffindor table. "RELEASE HIM THIS INSTANT!" she shouted. Harry removed his hands letting Malfoy off the table and looked at McGonagall. "What is the meaning of this?" she asked

Harry looked over to Neville and then over to Malfoy who looked furious, to Snape who who liked he couldn't wait to expel and then over to Dumbledore who was given him a calculated look.

"Malfoy nicked Neville's Remembrall professor." Harry answered. He wasn't going tell her about Malfoy's dig at Neville's parents. That would let the others know about it and Harry wasn't sure whether Neville was ready to share that piece of information about his life yet.

"All of this over a Remembrall. Mr Potter I'm really disappointed." McGonagall said.

"Malfoy insulted my parent's professor." Came Neville's voice over the quietness of the Great Hall. Harry looked over to Neville and saw a determined look in his friend's eye. One he hadn't seen until the DA in Harry's Fifth year. "Malfoy nicked my Remembrall and insulted me saying I forgotten how to be a pureblood. He then said that considering my upbringing from the lack of my parents he weren't surprised. Then Malfoy said that my grandmother should have given the Remembrall to my parent's maybe it would have helped them remember stuff. I got really mad at him so I punched him. Malfoy tried to retaliate and that's when Harry jumped him and grabbed his arm and forced him down onto the table to stop him punching me back."

Harry was really shocked at this. He wasn't expecting Neville to come out with something like this. He looked over to see McGonagall change her anger from Harry over to Malfoy.

"Mr Malfoy what do you say for yourself?" McGonagall said angrily. Clearly she knew about Neville's parents as well.

"He's lying." Malfoy replied smoothly. "I just came over to see whether they wanted to be friends and both Potter and Longbottom jumped on me." The reply he got from that sentence was deafening. Every single Gryffindor who heard what really went on all of a suddenly jumped out of there seats shouting at him.

"QUIET." Boomed Dumbledore. "It seems that the Gryffindors disagree with you Mr Malfoy."

Malfoy looked a little lost and looked over to the Slytherin table who were looking on to see what was going to happen next.

"Fifty Points from Slytherin for your behaviour Mr Malfoy and a detention." McGonagall said "I will send you a letter when I have the details."

"Headmaster." Snape spoke up for the first time. "It seems only fair that Mr Longbottom and Mr Potter receive a detention as well for fighting. We wouldn't want to show favouritism amongst the houses would we sir?"

Harry looked over to Dumbledore and saw him sigh and then nod in agreement. "Very well. Mr Potter and Mr Longbottom will both receive detentions the same time as Mr Malfoy."

McGonagall looked like she was going to protest but thought better of it. Snape and Malfoy then left and headed over to the Slytherin table. Dumbledore waited until he was out of ear shot from Snape and Malfoy before continuing. "I would like to say that I might be just a bit old but my hearing is applicable and I heard every word that was going on. Twenty points to Mr Longbottom for standing up for your parents and twenty points Mr Potter for standing up for Mr Longbottom. Both of you showed true Gryffindor courage. Now if you excuse me I have something to do." With that Dumbledore left leaving them with McGonagall.

"Ten points each for Bravery." McGonagall said even though Dumbledore had already done this. She then left with a smile on her face and Harry and Neville returned to their seats.

At three-thirty that afternoon the four of them started to head down to the grounds for their first flying lesson. The Slytherins were already there. About five minutes later Madam Hooch arrived.

"Well what are you waiting for? Everyone stand by a broomstick." Madam Hooch said. After everyone stood to the left of their broomstick she said "Put your right hand over the broomstick and say up."

"UP" Everyone shouted.

Harry's broomstick launched itself into his hand and he looked around and saw Malfoy's had done the same. Everyone else's was still on the ground. After Madam Hooch went around adjusting everyone's grip and Harry smiled silently to himself when Madam Hooch told Malfoy he was doing it wrong. Whilst she was going around adjusting the grips Harry turned towards Neville.

"Nev mate." Harry said using Neville's nickname from the future. "Don't be too scared, stay calm and you'll do fine." Neville turned to look at Harry and nodded.

"Now, when I blow my whistle, you kick off from the ground hard, rise a few feet then lean forward slightly to come back down. On my whistle, three, two..." But she never got to one. Despite Harry's warning to Neville he jumped off hard before the whistle got to Hooch's lips.

"Come back boy!" Hooch shouted to no affect. Neville was constantly getting higher and higher. All of a sudden he slipped of the broom and started hurtling towards the ground. Harry grabbed his broom but it was too late he was just getting mounted when Neville hit the ground.

"DAMN IT." Harry screamed in his head. He didn't want Neville to go to the hospital wing but it seems fate was against him today. Hooch examined Neville and when she touched his left wrist he screamed out in pain. Harry heard her mutter something about a broken wrist then she helped Neville up.

"None of you is to move while I take this boy to the hospital wing. You leave those brooms alone or you'll be out of Hogwarts before you can say quidditch." Hooch then carried Neville off towards the hospital wing. As soon as they were out of ear shot the Slytherins started laughing.

"Did you see his face, the great lump?" Malfoy said through fits of laughter.

"Shut up Malfoy." Parvati Patil said.

"Oh sticking up for Longbottom?" Pansy Parkinson sneered. "Never thought you'd be interested in fat little cry babies."

"Look!" Malfoy said running forward. "He left this stupid Remembrall behind." He lifted it up for everyone to see.

"Give it here Malfoy." Harry said oh so quietly but everyone managed to hear it. Everyone turned to watch Malfoy and Harry, hoping for a repeat of this morning. Malfoy turned to look at Harry.

"I think I'll leave it somewhere for Longbottom to find." Malfoy said grabbing his broom. "How about on the roof!" with that he kicked off and flew up in the air. "Come on Potter, you scared to do some little flying?"

Harry felt furious and reached out for the closest broom to him and it flew into his hands.

"Harry NO!" Hermione shouted "Madam Hooch told us not to move. You'll get expelled." Ignoring her he mounted the broom and flew up to meet Malfoy. He reached Malfoy and did a sudden turn on his broom which caused most Gryffindor girls to scream.

"GIVE IT HERE MALFOY!" Harry yelled at him. "OR I'LL KNOCK YOU OFF YOUR BROOM."

Malfoy looked a little shocked at Harry but soon recovered. "Yeah right Potter. You properly couldn't hit the broad side of a barn." Malfoy sneered.

Harry leaned forward and shot at Malfoy causing him to duck. Harry turned so sharply it caused some of the Gryffindor girls to scream again. "No Crabbe or Goyle to save your neck up here mate, it's just you and me!" Harry said to Malfoy.

Malfoy looked at Harry and then at the Remembrall and seemed to be thinking along the same lines. "If you want it go get it." Malfoy said to Harry and then threw the Remembrall in the opposite direction to Harry. Harry suddenly shot after it as it hurtled to the ground. He raced it down to the damp grass and about a foot from plummeting into the ground and mostly likely his death he pulled up. As his fingers wrapped themselves around the object, scarcely missing the hard ground he flew back up about 5 feet in the air with the Remembrall clutched in his left hand. He gently dismounted his broom in a crowd of cheering Gryffindors.

"HARRY POTTER." he heard the voice of Professor McGonagall. He turned to see McGonagall striding towards them with a face white as snow. Harry tried very hard not to smile.

"Quidditch team here I come" Harry thought as McGonagall reached Harry.

"Never... in all my years at Hogwarts..." McGonagall looked liked she was trying to find words to say. Harry looked over towards the Slytherins and saw Malfoy was back on the ground smiling from ear to ear.

'Yeah that's right keep smiling' Harry thought. 'I can't wait 'til I see your face when you find out that I made the Gryffindor quidditch team.'

"How dare you, you could have broken your neck!" McGonagall said furiously.

"It wasn't his fault Professor." Parvati said.

"Be quiet please." McGonagall responded.

"But Professor..." Ron tried.

"That's enough, Mr Weasley. Potter, if you would like to follow me." It wasn't a question rather a statement. Harry turned to follow

McGonagall, trying to hide his excitement of making the Quidditch team again. He had one last glance over his shoulder to see the Gryffindors looking worried and the Slytherins trying very hard not to cheer. Harry followed McGonagall across the grounds, into the great hall, up the great marble staircase and onto the 2nd floor corridor. She walked along it for five minutes before standing next to a door. Harry recognised it as Flitwick's classroom.

McGonagall opened the door and put her head around it so she could see into the classroom. "Excuse me Professor, could I borrow Wood for a moment?" she asked. Not a second later out walked Oliver Wood, captain of the Gryffindor quidditch team. "Follow me you two. They both followed her up the corridor and into a empty classroom...apart from Peeves. Harry looked past Peeves and looked at the rude things he was scribbling on the blackboard. Harry had trouble suppressing a giggle from what he saw was written on there.

"Out Peeves." McGonagall told the poltergeist. Peeves looked at Harry who gave a slight nod and Peeves calmly put the chalk onto the nearest desk and strode out through the nearest wall. McGonagall and Wood stood there shocked for a moment at Peeves' behaviour before McGonagall started talking again.

"Potter, this is Oliver Wood Captain of the Gryffindor quidditch team. Wood this is your new seeker!" McGonagall told the two boys. Wood expression changed from curiosity to sudden delight.

"Really professor. Seeker you say?" Wood said as he walked around Harry taken him all in. "Right build for it."

"Quite right" McGonagall agreed "The boy's a natural. Best catch I've seen in a while. I swear not even Charlie Weasley could of captured it. He didn't even fall of once he finished the fifty foot dive. Caught that thing he's holding before it touched the ground."

Wood looked liked Christmas had come early. "If we ever want a chance at that quidditch cup we'll need him to have a decent broom. Cleansweep seven or a Nimbus Two Thousand."

"I will speak to Professor Dumbledore to see if we could bend the rules a little bit. Heaven knows we need it. Flattened by Slytherin last match, Snape was gloating about it for weeks." McGonagall said.

"I'll write to Sirius, see if he could get me the Nimbus Two Thousand. He'll be pleased that I made the team. Thank you professor." Harry said.

McGonagall simply smiled and nodded her head. "I want to hear you've been training hard or I'll reconsider punishing you. Your father would have been so proud Harry. He was an excellent quidditch player himself. With that she left the room.

At dinner time Harry joined Ron and Hermione in the great hall, Neville was still in the hospital wing and told them what happened with McGonagall. "Seeker?" Ron said with awe. "But first years never make the team you must be the youngest quidditch player in about...

"A centaur." Harry said "Wood told me. I start training next week but don't tell anyone, Wood is trying to keep it a secret. Of course you can tell Neville when he gets back from the hospital wing." Harry looked away from his friends to see Fred and George hurrying over.

"Congrats Harry mate." Fred said

"Wood just told us you're on the team. We were going to suggest you to him anyway after you beat Charlie a couple of times." George said after his twin brother. "Never seen Wood this excited. Anyway got to go, Lee said he's found a new passageway out of the school."

"Yeah but you already know all of the passage ways 'cause of the marauders map." Harry said smiling at them.

"True Harry old friend, but no one is meant to know about that remember." Fred said now looking at Ron and Hermione.

"What's the marauders map?" Hermione asked "Is it something to get you in trouble because if it is..."

"It's nothing Hermione." Harry said "Don't worry about it." Ron had a smile across his face, Harry had already told and showed him what the marauders map was. Harry looked up to see Malfoy and his goons walking over with a smug look on his face.



"Having your last meal Potter before taking the train back to that murderous blood traitor of a godfather?" Draco drawled.

"You're a lot calmer now you got your Crabbe and Goyle watching your back. You weren't this cool up in the air were you Malfoy?" Harry said. Malfoy looked over to the high table to see McGonagall and Dumbledore looking in the direction. Harry locked eyes with Dumbledore and silently pleading with him to stay there. Harry wasn't sure at first whether he got the message but when McGonagall started to rise Dumbledore put a hand on her shoulder and shook his head causing her to sit back down.

"I'd take you on my own anytime anywhere. Tonight if you want." Malfoy said now looking Harry directly in the eyes. "Midnight, in the trophy room."

"You're on, Ron is my second who's yours?" Harry said although he wasn't planning on going anyhow."

After sizing those up Malfoy made a decision. "Crabbe, don't be late." He told Harry.

"Wouldn't dream of it." Harry replied and Malfoy and his mates slouched off to the Slytherin table.

"I can't believe you're planning to go through with this you'll get Gryffindor into trouble." Hermione said angry at them. "Don't you guy's want to win the house championship?"

"Of course I do Hermione." Neville said "But Malfoy needs to be put into place." Harry looked at Ron who nodded in agreement. Hermione turned back to her food refusing to talk to all of them.

Come half past eleven Harry was sitting in front of the common room fire, not planning to go to the fake duel. All of a sudden there was footsteps heard coming down from the boy's staircase and Ron came into view. "We got to go Harry if we're going to meet Malfoy in time." Ron said looking at Harry.

"Do you really think Malfoy is going to be there? Come on. I might act dumb but I ain't that dumb. He'll probably snitch to Snape or Filch trying to get us expelled." Harry said.

"And what if he is there? I for one don't want to be called a coward for not turning up." Ron said heading for the portrait door."

Harry followed him trying to stop him. "I can't believe you two are going to do this." Hermione's voice came from the staircase.

"Hermione go back to bed this doesn't concern you." Ron said.

Hermione looked hurt at what he just said. "I thought we were friends." She replied.

"We are Hermione." Harry said. "It's Ron who wants to go out gallivanting around the school at night. I'll prefer if I was in bed." Harry said looking at Ron.

"Well excuse me for not wanting to look like a coward in front of Malfoy and his goons." With that Ron marched out of the Gryffindor tower. Hermione and Harry followed him out.

"Don't you care about Gryffindor Ron? I for one don't want to see Slytherin win the house cup. I don't want you to lose all those points I got off McGonagall for knowing all about switching spells."

"Go away." Ron hissed at her.

"Ron shut the hell up, you don't talk to friends like that. Hermione is right lets go back." Harry said looking at Ron.

"I can't believe you say no to a fight Harry." Ron said "after what you did on the train and what you did this morning."

"Both times was self defence. Train was trying to get him to go away and leave us alone and you were there at breakfast when he insulted Neville's parents. You might not know about his parents but I do and that insult was below the belt by a long way and I wasn't going to let him get away with it. This on the other hand is just stupid because I bet anything he's just trying to get us expelled. When we get to the trophy I bet we find nothing. Either that or Snape or Filch." Harry ranted at Ron. Ron didn't say anything but kept on walking. When they came to the end of the corridor they met Neville who was on the ground.

"Neville?" Hermione asked.

Neville looked up and saw the three of them. "Oh thank god, I forgot the password to the Gryffindor common room. Been out here for hours. The Bloody Baron has been past twice already."

"The password is pig snout Neville but it won't do you any good." Hermione said. "The Fat Lady is off somewhere so we can't get back in otherwise me and Harry would be in bed. We're trying to stop Ron here from getting us expelled."

Ron just ignored them and walked all the way to the trophy room with Harry, Neville and Hermione running after him. When Harry caught up with Ron his nerves were on a very tight string. "Ron." Harry hissed at him. "Do you remember that curse Quirrell was telling us about in our last defence lesson? The bat bogey curse?" Ron looked at Harry and nodded. "Well, who do we know that can do that curse better than anyone?" Ron suddenly looked scared. "If we get caught and expelled I will tell Ginny to nick someone's wand and perform that curse on you and I'll be right next to her laughing my head off at you." Ron suddenly gulped. He knew what Ginny's curse was like. Ron turned the corner and came to the corridor of the trophy room. He walked along it and went inside.

"No one here. Maybe he's late?" Ron said hopefully at the other three.

"Or maybe Ron." Hermione started threw clenched teeth. "That me and Harry were right in the beginning and he's not coming." All of a sudden the door started to open and Ron turned to look at Harry and Hermione with a triumphant look on his face. However that soon disappeared when Filch's voice came across the trophy room.

"Sniff around my sweet, the Slytherin boy said they would be here. Check the corners, they might be trying to hide. They are in here somewhere."

Harry looked over to the other three and gave them a look to say follow him and he turned heading for the only other exit. Harry looked back behind him to see if Filch had come round the corner yet and he hadn't. He turned to look where he was going but he was too late. He walked into a suit of armour and went crashing down in a lot of noise. He suddenly jumped up and shouted run at the other three and they raced out of the trophy room Ron leading they way.

When they were at least a floor above the trophy room they came to a halt in an empty corridor.

"WE told you." Hermione hissed at Ron.

"We've got to get back to the common room and quickly." Harry said although that moment Peeves flew into the room. Harry stayed back in the shadows so Peeves couldn't see him. 'Time to have fun with Peeves I say.' He thought.

"All looky here." Peeves crackled. "ickle firsties wandering around at midnight. Should go tell Filch you know. For your own good." Peeves looked over to the corner and saw Harry and gave a slight wink.

"Please don't Peeves you'll get us thrown out." Hermione begged.

"Should tell Filch you know." Peeves said. "For your own good you know."

"Get out of the way you imbecile." Ron said making a big mistake.

"STUDENTS OUT OF BED ALONG THE FIFTH FLOOR COORIDOR. STUDENTS OUT OF BED ALONG THE FIFTH FLOOR CORRIDOR" Peeves shouted. Ron bolted out of the room followed by the others to the end of the corridor where the door heading into the forbidden corridor stood. Ron tried to open the door but to no prevail.

"Oh no, it's locked, we're going to get in so much trouble." Ron moaned.

"Move over Ron." Hermione said. Ron moved back as Hermione took out her wand. "Alohomora!" Hermione said pointing it at the lock. They heard a click as the lock opened and they hurried inside. Ron and Hermione put their ears to the door whilst Harry and Neville took in the sight of Fluffy.

"Err guys?" Harry said backing away ever so slightly. "Can I suggest we open the door back up?"

"What and let Filch catch us Harry?" Ron said as though Harry suggested the most stupid thing in the world.

"It would be better than being eaten by that Ron." Neville said finding his voice. Ron and Hermione turned around to look at the three headed dog Hagrid had christened Fluffy. Harry grabbed the handle of the door and pushed it open before starting to run again. He ran all the way up to the portrait of the Fat Lady without stopping. "Pig Snout" Harry said before the Fat Lady could say anything. She swung open to let them all in and they scrambled to the common room and slouched into the sofa by the fire. 'I really need to get fit' Harry thought. They were quiet for some time before any of them decided to talk

"What do they think they're doing?" Ron said "Keeping a monster like that in the castle."

"Do either of you lot use your eyes? Didn't you see what it was standing on?" Hermione said.

"Can I take a wild guess and say the floor?" Neville replied "Sorry Hermione but I was preoccupied with the fact that it had three heads. Wouldn't really care what his feet were doing."

"It was standing on a trap door." Harry said

Hermione looked over to Harry and nodded "At least one of you lot pay attention. It was guarding something!"

"Guarding something?" Ron asked "What was it guarding?"

"You remember what Hagrid said last week?" Neville piped up "Gringotts is the safest place in the world if you want to hide something except maybe..."

"Hogwarts." Harry finished for him. "Its guarding whatever the people were trying to steal from that vault."

"Well I'm off to bed before Ron here thinks of giving us any more clever ideas to get us killed or worse, expelled. Good night." With that she walked over to the staircase leading up to the girls dormitories and disappeared off to bed.

"You'd think we dragged her along wouldn't you?" Ron said.

"Stay here Ron!" Harry snapped at him. Harry walked up the staircase and into his bedroom, grabbed the marauders map and brought it back downstairs to show Ron. "Look at the Slytherin common room Ron. Draco Malfoy in bed. Next time we say it's a trap believe us will you." Harry said.

"Sorry." Ron muttered "But if it weren't for Peeves we wouldn't have had to run to the 3rd floor forbidden corridor."

"You don't listen do you Ron! Peeves said students on the fifth floor corridor...we were on the third! He was doing us a favour. Why do you think we never met Filch after that. God Ron pay attention next time!" With that Harry walked back up to his dormitory and went to bed. When he got settled he smiled ever so slightly. 'Even though Ron was a complete dork tonight, at least they're wandering what Fluffy is guarding.' With that thought he drifted off to sleep.

A/N: So sorry guys this has been a very long chapter to Write I'm sorry that I failed in my 2 week deadline hope you forgive me. If u hadn't noticed its 2 chapters from the Philosophers Stone Chapter eight and Nine in one. After I done chapter eight I only had three thousand words which is so small so I decided to carry on and add chapter nine to it as well. hope you all like it have fun and review! Seven and a half thousand words! Longest chapter so far. I also created a yahho group were if you wish you can discuss this story and ask questions. Link should be in my profile page.

Disclaimer: I do Not Own Harry Potter

Harry, Ron, Hermione, and Neville sat at the Gryffindor table eating breakfast and waiting for the owls to arrive. Harry thought that his broomstick should be getting here any day now and low and behold six owls came fluttering into the great hall carrying the Nimbus Two Thousand. Tied to it was a letter and he ripped it off, expecting to see Professor McGonagall's hand writing. Instead he saw Sirius's.

Heya Harry,

Congratulations on making the Quidditch team, your father would have been so proud. Inside this package is a NimbusTtwoTthousand. McGonagall has asked me to tell you not to open it up at the breakfast table. I say who cares, everyone will find out soon enough so go and open it up.

By the way I suggest you write another letter to that lovely wife of yours. Ginny is upset a little that you didn't tell her about making the Quidditch team. She's starting to think that you are forgetting her. I of course told her that was impossible but I don't quite think she believed me so write a letter will you? Anyway got to go and have fun. Win Gryffindor that Quidditch cup will you. Slytherin have won for so many years in a row now I heard.

Lupin stopped by this week, he seems okay. Well the best he can be considering it was the week of the full moon. Every full moon I go out with him as Snuffles to keep him company. Although they say there is a new potion out called Wolfsbane. It's supposed to let the werewolf be able to keep his mind. Have you heard of it? Does it work? Anyway other than that its been a bit boring without you around. Although I'm glad you're not here to prank me. I still wake up thinking my buttocks are on fire. Anyway I hope you're having a great time at Hogwarts. Nothing too bad happens this year right? I'll send you another letter soon. Write to Ginny.

Love

Sirius

Harry instantly kicked himself for forgetting to tell Ginny. It sounded like she was thinking that Harry would forget her. Harry instantly

grabbed a spare parchment and quill and began writing a letter to Ginny.

Ginny,

Don't ever think that I'm forgetting you. How could I ever forget someone like you? Bat bogey hex visit my dreams regally in order for me not to forget you. You're my best friend along with my friends here. You're very important to me. I would have told you about Quidditch but I got caught up on school work that I need to do. I would of eventually told you about it so please don't be mad at me. I have Quidditch practise on Saturday, wish me luck. How are you anyway having fun? How are your plans for Romania coming along? I'm glad you get to see Charlie over Christmas. It's the time you meant to spend with your family. Hope you have lots of fun and again I apologise for not telling you about Quidditch. Please forgive me.

Harry.

Harry gave the letter to Hedwig. "You don't have to deliver it straight away alright. You can go up the Owlery for a bit before you take it to her okay." Harry told Hedwig. Hedwig gave an affectionate nip on his ear. She let him tie the letter to her leg and she with the other owls that brought the broomstick flew out of the great hall.

"Who was that letter to?" Neville asked.

"Sirius, just to say thank you for the broom stick." Harry lied. He didn't want them to know that he was constantly writing to Ginny. Hermione was too suspicious for her own good and if she heard that he was writing to Ginny almost once every week then she'd be a nightmare.

"What's in the package?" Ron asked.

"Nimbus Two Thousand." Harry said. Ron and Neville just looked at him gobsmacked.

"They're meant to be the best broom out on the market!" Ron exclaimed. "Bloody hell Harry, you'll wipe the Slytherins off the pitch with this!"



"Well that is the plan." Harry said smiling back.

Hermione stopped reading her book and looked at the package.  
"Harry that is a broomstick."

"Never, where have you been Hermione." Neville said with a smile.

Hermione ignored Neville's comment and turned to Harry. "You have to turn it in before you get in trouble. First years aren't allow broomsticks you know that. I suggest you send it back to Sirius and tell him that."

Harry just looked at her gobsmacked. "Hermione I'm allowed this broom! What did you think I was going to play on with? I'm the Quidditch team for god's sake. McGonagall was the one who wrote to Sirius to get it for me."

"Oh." Hermione said looking down at her food. "Sorry."

"Don't matter Hermione, you just didn't want us in trouble that's all. I assure you I'm allowed to have this." Harry said now smiling at her.  
"Maybe I let you ride it later."

Hermione looked suddenly scared at the thought of flying on a broom. "Oh no Harry, you don't have to do that. Don't worry. I don't need to ride it."

"But it's so much fun Hermione." Harry urged to her.

"No, no, flying and Quidditch are for boys and stuff." Hermione said picking up her book.

"Yes that's why all three chasers for the Gryffindor team are girls and Ginny can out fly any of her brothers. Including Charlie who was Gryffindor's best seeker after my dad. Come to thing about it she could properly out fly me as well." Harry said.

"She can not." said the twins together. They were sitting a little down the table but could still hear the conversation.

Ron looked at Harry thinking hard. "Harry. Ginny can't even fly. I've never seen her on a broom before. Let alone be able to out fly Charlie or you."

"Every night when everyone is in bed she sneaks down to the paddock and takes out a broom and practices flying for a couple of hours." Harry explained. "Trust me when I say she can out fly any of you. She'll join the Quidditch team for sure if I ever get her to try out for it. She doesn't really like flying in front of everyone. She doesn't even know that I know that she goes out at night to practise."

Ron and the twins just sat there gobsmacked for a while before the twins grew massive grins on their faces and burst out laughing. "Good one Harry." Fred chuckled out in-between fits of laughter.

"Yeah" George agreed "You nearly had us believing you for a second. So much for all no teasing Ginny huh. Wait till I tell her that you said that. Someone is going to be in trouble."

Ron's face also turned into a smile as Fred and George went back to eating. "You had me scared for a minute there, mate. Don't do anything like that again." Ron said putting a bit of sausage in his mouth.

Harry got very annoyed fairly quickly with this. "Don't you tell her anything of the sort, George. If you do it would be a lie. I was not teasing her. I would never do that to her. Ginny can out fly any of you. And she'll prove it to you as well if I can get her on a broom."

The twins and Ron looked at Harry then went back eating there breakfast without saying a word.

Harry got of the table and, with broomstick in hand, left the great hall. But no sooner had he left then Malfoy came out behind him.

"Oi Potter." Malfoy said. Harry turned to come face to face with the youngest Malfoy. "You're in for it now Potter. That's a broomstick!"

"So people keep telling me." Harry replied offhandedly.

"First years aren't allowed broomsticks Potter." Malfoy said, his face gleaming with glee. "You'll be expelled for sure this time."

"Ah Malfoy I'm very sorry to disappoint you but I don't thing I'll be leaving." Harry said pretending to be very upset. "I like it here too much to leave."

"Professor, Professor. Potter's been sent a broomstick." Draco called to someone over Harry's shoulder. Harry couldn't see who it was because he had his back to the entrance of the great hall. Harry turned around to see McGonagall.

"Professor, Professor." Harry called "Malfoy isn't as dumb as I thought he was!"

"That was uncalled for Mr Potter. And Mr Malfoy," McGonagall said "It was I who said he could have one."

Harry turned to look at Malfoy's face drain of colour. "Mr Malfoy." McGonagall said. "I suggest you leave to go to your common room where you belong." Malfoy gave one pure look of loathing at Harry.

"Mr Potter, I suggest you take that lovely new broomstick up to your common room. If you'll excuse me I have some sixth year essays to mark before this evening." With that she walked up the stairs and disappeared around the corner. Harry watched as Malfoy walked towards the dungeons before turning to walk up the stairs.

Once he put the broomstick in one of his compartments in his trunk he left the Gryffindor tower and went for a walk. He didn't need to be down to the Quidditch pitch for team practice until seven that evening. After about twenty minutes of walking alone around the castle he noticed a hidden room on the marauders map that he'd never been into before. It was about a ten minute walk from the Gryffindor tower and he turned the corner to notice the blank wall that hid that very room.

He looked at the wall for a while before curiosity got the better of him and asked Hogwarts to open the room up. As he stepped inside the first thing he noticed was Estelle sleeping on a perch close to the window. 'That's where she got to' Harry thought as he continued to look around the room.

"Well, well, well. Hello stranger. You have finally decided to grace us with your presence have you?" Harry looked behind him to see Simon laid across a table in the far corner.

"So you guys did come to Hogwarts then. I was wandering when you guys would turn up." Harry said to Simon

"Us turn up? We've been here since the first of September mate." Simon said "It's us who've been waiting for you."

"Oh yes and how was I supposed to know that you were here." Harry asked "Hogwarts is a big castle. Please explain to me how I would know you guys were in this specific room?"

"You have the marauders map don't you?" Simon asked

"Yes it shows passageway's and people." Harry explained. "It doesn't show animals."

"Oh." Simon replied. "Our bad then Harry. How has your year been so far? Anything you want us to do or just stay out of trouble?"

"Like you could stay out of trouble if you even tried." Harry said "Nah nothing much. Keep an eye on the third floor corridor, anything happens tell me. Apart from that, nothing much. You can stay in here if you wish as no one knows about it apart from the twins but I doubt that they would come in here."

Harry walked over to the window and the perch that Estelle was sleeping on. "Where did that come from?" Harry asked indicating the perch that Estelle was using.

"If memory serves me correctly she just turned up with it two days ago. She used to stand on the window sill but apparently she was getting too cold so she decided to get the stand. Where she got it from she won't tell me. Phoenixes are full of secrets Harry. You should beware of that." Simon said.

"Yes I know phoenixes hold secrets." Harry said "Mostly they hold their owner's secrets. They're the most fascinating and I'll say most magical animal alive. I'm surprised that a phoenix chose me as a companion. I didn't have a phoenix last time around. Maybe this time it might make the war more in my favour."

All of a sudden Estelle brought her head up to look at Harry in the eyes. She stretched out her wings and then took off towards him and landed on his shoulder where she rubbed her head against his neck, singing the phoenix song. What was most surprising about it is

that he understood the words of the song. It was almost like another language. Phoenix language Harry thought.

"We have been worried Harry." Estelle sang

To say that Harry was shocked beyond belief was to put it mildly. Estelle just talked to him.

"I can talk to phoenixes as well as snake now?" Harry said out loud.

"Not all phoenixes Harry. Only to the one you are bonded to. I chose to bond to you as I noticed conflict inside you. Someone older than you looked. As I looked inside you more I saw what was to come and what you were trying to stop. I wanted to help in the best way I could. I would have spoken to you earlier if I could but the bonding between phoenixes and the person they decided to become their master takes time." Estelle explained.

Harry looked over to Simon and then back to Estelle. "Did you know of this Simon?" Harry asked him.

"Know what Harry?" Simon asked.

"You didn't understand that Simon?" Harry asked.

"Only you can understand me Harry." Estelle said.

"Really I mean this could be cool, really cool." Harry replied in awe.

"Quite right Harry, my friend." Estelle said. "It's very useful and it means that no one can overhear us also."

"Well they can overhear me." Harry said.

"If you speak out loud." Estelle said.

"Huh" Harry thought.

"Finally caught on then?" Estelle said in his head again. "I thought you'd figure it out when I told you I read your memories. I thought you were meant to be the smart one Harry. That's what masters are meant to be right? Estelle said in his head and he heard a chuckle as well.

"Har har" Harry thought.

"Well I thought so." He heard her say. Shaking his head he settled down onto a comfy settee, waiting for three o'clock to come and his first Quidditch practise.

Come five to three Harry sat waiting at the Quidditch pitch, broom in hand. Harry looked around to see if Wood was around yet but there was still no sign of him. Harry decided that he should get changed and went into the changing rooms. Inside he met the whole Quidditch team and Wood waiting for him.

"Well Potter. Good to see you. Meet the Gryffindor Quidditch team." Wood said. Wood was standing near the blackboard where Harry knew him to drone on for hours about new tactics. "As you obviously played Quidditch before I won't go into boring details but I'll tell you who is who and what position they play. You obviously already know the twins from growing up with them. They are the beaters. You got me as our keeper. You then got Katie Bell, she was reserve last year but I feel she's good enough to come onto the team properly, Alicia Spinnet and Angelina Johnson. Them three are our star chasers and will give us a shot at the Quidditch cup this year and now we got you as seeker. According to Fred and George you're pretty good." Wood finished his speech.

"Pretty good?" Fred said acting shocked.

"He's the best Oliver, is old Harry here." George chimed in.

"He beat Charlie this summer at Quidditch at our house. Never seen anyone fly like him before." Fred said.

Now everyone was looking at him. "I ain't that good." Harry replied to Fred and George's comments.

"Not that good!" Fred exclaimed.

"You could join the England international team if you tried out for them you know." George said.

"Guys I'm eleven." Harry said. He was really getting embarrassed right now. Of course he knew he was good but he didn't think he

was good enough for England. He told them this and they just laughed it off.

"Of course you are. The next Quidditch world cup in four years time. I'll bet any money you will be playing in it." Fred said.

Harry just shook his head and sat down to listen to Wood's team talk. After about an hour of talking and loads of different plays they finally managed to get out onto the pitch. This is what Harry was waiting for. He grabbed his broom and zoomed up into the air.

"Harry" called out Wood from the ground. "I'm going to let the snitch out, try and catch it."

Harry saw a glimpse of the snitch before it whisked out of sight. He waited for five minutes before zooming off after it. He flew between his team mates looking for it. All of a sudden he saw a glimpse of gold near Katie's ankle and went zooming after it. The snitch all of a sudden changed direction and headed straight down. He went into a spectacular dive. Fred noticing this and sent a bludger aiming straight at Harry. However Fred timed it wrong and instead of hitting Harry's side, if both Harry and the bludger kept going at the same velocity it would hit him straight in the head. With some difficulty Harry stretched out and held his body as close to his Nimbus as possible and he attempted a sloth grip role. The bludger zoomed straight past him as he hung upside on his broomstick. Unfortunately Harry was still headed down into a dive and he crashed into the ground. All of a sudden he was surrounded by the rest of his team mates.

"Harry are you alright?" Fred said a little shaky.

Harry lifted himself into a sitting position before looking up at the team. "Bloody hell Fred. I know I'm sometimes annoying but hitting a bludger at my head." Harry shook his head in fake disappointment. "Was that really necessary?"

This caused the rest of the team to laugh out loud. "So you're alright?" Angelina asked.

"Never better." Harry said. "Just next time try aiming somewhere where it wouldn't do me permanent brain damage."

"Not that it would make much of a difference that." George said smiling. Fred now joined in the laughter and soon all of the team was back in the air training as hard as ever.

After a while Wood called for the end of the Quidditch practice as it was getting too dark to see anything. Harry thought he was scared for Harry. Wood was really shaking up when the bludger nearly hit him.

"That Cup is ours this year mark my words." Wood said as they trudged up to the castle. "That was some flying you did in practice Harry. Seen nothing like it here in Hogwarts. You could be better than Charlie if you put enough work into it. And I totally agree with Fred and George about England. Not right now but if you seriously train hard we'll be seeing you in the international scene in a couple of year's time after you're finished at Hogwarts."

"I'm just concentrating on my school work at the moment Wood." Harry said.

"Yes but still you have some very raw talent mate. You're definitely one to look for in the future." Wood said.

Harry walked along the corridor and towards the fat lady. He came to it and entered the password and he and Oliver walked into the Gryffindor common room.

On Halloween morning Harry found himself alone down in the great hall eating breakfast. The hall had been decorated with pumpkins and bats to make people get into the holiday spirit. After a while Ron, Neville and Hermione joined him. Harry thought about today. It shouldn't be too bad actually. Hermione was their friend this time around so no need for her to run off to the girls toilets tonight. Harry did need to tell Dumbledore though. He needed to know what was going to happen. So he made his way up to the teachers table.

"Professor, can I speak to you in private sometime today sir?" Harry asked Dumbledore.

"Of course Harry. How about this evening? Say seven o'clock Harry. Just before the feast?" Dumbledore said looking at Harry.



Harry shuffled his feet a little before continuing. "Err sorry sir but that won't do. I need it to be at roughly around lunch time actually. It's really important sir."

Dumbledore look at Harry with a questioning glance. "I have something on this lunch time Harry, are you sure it can't wait?"

"No sir, well you sir, I properly could tell you just before the feast but I would prefer to tell you it sooner sir." Harry said.

Dumbledore studied him a moment before nodding his head in agreement. "Very well Harry I will meet you in my office at lunch time." Harry nodded and then left to go to charms. Not listening to what Dumbledore said next.

Harry was sitting at the back of the room with Ron, Hermione and Neville. Harry was paired with Neville whilst Ron was paired with Hermione. Professor Flitwick was telling the class how to perform the spell properly. Harry wasn't paying any attention.

"Harry you're not even listening." Hermione said through greeted teeth from his right where she was sitting next to Ron. "No wonder you find it hard to do the spells if you don't listen properly."

"Hermione lay off him." Ron said "We can't all be a big know it all like you."

Harry and Neville turned to look at Ron as tears welled up in Hermione's eyes. "Ronald Weasley I hate you!" she screamed out before running out of the classroom. Harry stood up and made to go after her but Neville stopped him.

"Let her go mate, she probably needs sometime on her own." He said.

"But she needs us." Harry said.

"No Harry." Neville countered. "She needs some time alone."

Harry turned to look at Ron who slumped back in his seat, scared of the look Harry was giving him. "If anything happens to her it will be on your head you got that?" Harry said through clenched teeth. Ron slowly nodded then went back to his feather.

"Everything okay boys?" Professor Flitwick asked from the front of the class.

"Fine sir." Harry replied. Harry took his seat and watched Ron and Neville go back to work on their feather whilst Harry's thoughts wandered. Before Harry knew it double charms was finished and it was lunch time. But Hermione still hadn't turned up. Harry slowly walked towards the stone gargoyle that hid Dumbledore's chambers. When he came face to face with it he then realised that he didn't know the password. So he just asked the gargoyle to move. It revealed a self spiralling staircase that once Harry stood upon took him to the door that belonged to the headmaster's office.

Harry knocked on the door and heard Dumbledore say "Enter" and Harry opened the door to come into the office. It was just as Harry remembered it. Fawkes' stand in a corner and bits and bobs all over the place. It felt rather comforting to be back in here.

"Well Harry sit down." Dumbledore said indicating the chair opposite him. Harry sat down in the chair and looked up to see the headmaster's face looking at him wandering and waiting.

"It's about this evening sir. Professor Quirrell makes his first attempt on the stone tonight." Harry explained.

"Ah yes but he fails?" Dumbledore asked.

"Yes sir. Snape manages to head him off before he gets too far." Harry said.

A smile crossed Dumbledore's face as this point. "I get the impression you don't like Severus too much Harry? From what he told me from his first lesson and whilst watching you two interact over the past two months. Why is that Harry?"

"I wish I could tell you Albus. But I'm afraid if I do it will change the timeline too much. Then me being from the future won't help me at all and we will be in the same situation that we were in last time. And that is what got us all killed." Harry said. He really did want to tell Dumbledore about Snape. But not right now. And what he said was true. If he changed too much then the advantage he had at the

moment would be taken away from him. The unknown was what killed all of them last time. What killed Ginny last time. He would not let that happen again!

"Very well Harry, back to tonight. If Quirrell tries to steal the stone this time, which you know very well that he won't be able to succeed no matter what did stop him this evening then why do you need to see me?

"Snape is the one that stops him this evening. But that's not the point. The point is what he does to get the chance to steal the stone." Harry explained.

"Snape indeed." Dumbledore said now smiling and a twinkle in his eye. "So what happens Harry. How does Quirrell get the chance to try at the stone?"

Harry took a deep breath before telling Dumbledore. "He lets a troll into the school as a distraction."

Dumbledore reaction to this was expected. Rather than being relaxed his attitude changed completely. "This cannot happen Harry; I will not risk the lives of my students. No matter what the cause. You said at the beginning of the year no student gets hurt during this year from the result of letting Quirrell stay on with this job. Letting a troll into the school dispels this theory." Dumbledore said now with a serious tone that Harry was used to him using when he was leader of the Order.

"Dumbledore." Harry explained "No one does. Quirrell comes in halfway through the feast saying about a troll in the dungeon. Every single student bar me, Ron and Hermione goes safely to the dormitories. The only reason me, Ron and Hermione weren't was 'cause of a tiff between Ron and Hermione and she wasn't at the feast so she wouldn't have known about the troll. This time around I will make sure Hermione is there tonight. No student will be hurt. We cannot let Voldemort suspect that we know things, that would be very bad Albus."

Dumbledore look to consider things for a bit then sighed. "You are the one from the future Harry so it is your decision what you change. Just be careful."

"I will Albus." Harry replied. "I promise."

"Very well Harry." Albus said looking at Harry in the eyes. "Thank you for informing me."

"Well you would be upset and disappointed if I didn't." Harry said.

"Quite right Harry. Now I do have another thing that is on my mind." Dumbledore said his twinkle in his eye brighter than Harry had ever seen it before. "May I ask how you got into my office when I know for a fact I didn't tell you the password?"

Harry's throat went dry at this question. "Well... hmm... magic?" Harry tried and saw the twinkle grow even more brightly.

"I do understand the need to keep some secrets Harry." Dumbledore explained. "But I am concerned from what I am hearing from your teachers in the staff room. Professor Snape is declaring you a squib and you should be sent home."

"WHAT!" Harry shouted before bursting out in laughter. "Me a squib." Harry squeezed out clutching his sides in fits of laughter. "Man if I didn't hate Snape so much I would go congratulate him. I haven't managed to laugh this hard in ages. And growing up the second time around with Fred and George as good as brothers then that's saying something.

"Indeed Harry. But I suggest you show maybe just a little bit of magic. Maybe just so that people don't think that you're a squib alright?" Dumbledore said.

"Meh you might be right. I might manage to change a match stick into a needle next transfiguration class." Harry said.

"You still haven't shown McGonagall you can do that?" Dumbledore said. "No wonder people are talking."

"Well at least you know I'm no a squib." Harry replied shrugging "As long as that's okay you won't chuck me out right?"

"Yes, but I suggest you do some magic soon. Just to be on the safe side. The board of governors can overrule me and chuck you out if

they see no evidence." Dumbledore explained "And I'm sure you want to be here next year when that lovely wife of yours turns up."

Harry's thought immediately went to Ginny and the events of next year. He wouldn't risk not being there for her. No matter what he would be here next year. Although he hadn't one hundred percent decided what to do about next year he was going to be there for her no matter what.

"Harry my boy are you okay?" Dumbledore asked with concern.

"What?" Harry said breaking out of his thoughts. "Yeah I'm fine Albus."

"Does something happen to Ginny next year?" Dumbledore asked concern again.

"One year at a time remember Albus. One year at a time." Harry replied.

Dumbledore looked at Harry for a while before slowly nodding. "Okay Harry, is that it?"

"Yeah Albus that is it. I'll see you later." Harry said before leaving the office, his thoughts still on Ginny.

Harry walked towards the girls toilets. He was going to find Hermione. Harry walked towards the door when someone coughed behind. He turned around to see Professor Snape.

"Potter, WHAT do you think you are doing?" Snape asked "That is a girl's bathroom. Twenty points from Gryffindor and if ever catch you trying to being a perv again I will make sure you are expelled! Now get moving along."

Harry wasn't paying much attention that afternoon. Events of what will happen this evening running through his mind causing him not to pay attention to the classes. Later that evening Harry tried again to get to Hermione but when he turned the corner he saw Snape standing beside the door. He obviously didn't know Hermione was in there. Although, Harry thought, even if he did he'll properly still act the same way. Harry would do anything to hex Snape into oblivion right now.

Soon came the feast and Harry still hadn't managed to get to Hermione. Harry sat poking at his food waiting for Quirrell. Why did Hermione have to be in that bathroom now? Was it fate that she had to be there? Harry didn't know why. They were friends already. There was no need for her to be in there.

Ten minutes latter Harry thought he might as well eat something and starting grabbing for some food when the doors to the great hall burst open and Professor Quirrell came running down between the aisles of the tables. "TROLL IN THE DUNGEON!" Quirrell screamed running towards the head table. "TROLL IN THE DUNGEON!" he screamed again reaching the teachers head table. "Thought you ought to know." He said faintly before dropping to the floor.

There was a sudden raise in the volume of noise in the great hall before Dumbledore let off a few bangs with his wand causing the whole hall to go quite.

"PREFECTS! LEAD YOUR STUDENTS BACK TO YOUR HOUSES NOW. TEACHERS FOLLOW ME TO THE DUNGEONS." Dumbledore roared.

Percy immediately took control. "First years follow me. Stick together, stay close behind and follow orders. You'll be safe if you follow my orders. Everyone out of the way, first year's coming through. Out of the way please, excuse me I'm a prefect, out of the way please.

"How did a troll get in?" Neville asked.

"Don't ask me, trolls are meant to be very stupid and dumb." Ron said.

"That's my point!" Neville said "A troll couldn't get in without someone helping it."

They left the great hall and went up two flights of stairs to the second floor corridor. They were just about to go up another set of stairs when Harry pulled Ron and Neville back.

"What?" Ron asked.

"Hermione! Ron." Harry said "She doesn't know about the troll. We need to go get her."

Ron and Neville shared a glance before nodding. Harry, Ron and Neville ran off in the opposite direction towards the girls bathroom. They ran all the way to the bathroom and rushed inside. Hermione looked out of the cubical with a look of shock to see them there.

"What are you guys doing? This is a girl's bathroom." Hermione hissed.

"Hermione." Neville said.

"There's a troll in the castle, someone let it loose." Ron continued.

"We need to get out of here and to the common room." Harry finished. He would let the teachers take care of the troll. Hermione started heading towards them then stopped dead in her tracks. Harry not really wanting to know why but suspecting it anyhow turned around to see the troll just coming into the bathroom.

'Bugger' Harry thought as the troll noticed the four of them.

The troll lifted its club and made to swing it at them. All four of them ducked just in time and felt the club just miss their heads. The troll looked to get mad at this as he raised his club again and brought it down towards them.

"Someone do something!" Hermione screamed.

Harry not really caring of blowing his cover now reached for his wand to knock out the troll but before he could even go to reach for it he heard Ron scream "Wigardium leviosa" the club stopped moving downwards as Ron's spell came to affect. The club remained level with the troll's head. Harry not waiting for the troll to recover flicked his wrist at the club without anyone noticing and it flew towards the troll hitting it on its head with full force knocking it out. The troll fell to the floor and landed within 5 inches of Harry.

All four of them were quiet before they heard running and the doors to the bathroom burst open and Professors McGonagall, Snape, Quirrell and Dumbledore himself came into the bathroom.

Quirrell looked at the troll and let out a whimper before sitting down next to it clutching his heart.

"Is it... is it dead?" McGonagall asked him.

"N-n-no. j-just knocked out." Quirrell stammered.

McGonagall then turned to the four of them her lips straight as Harry had ever seen them "What unearth were you lot doing! Why aren't you in your dormitories? You're lucky you're not dead." Harry looked over to see Ron and Neville looking down at the ground obviously very nervous and afraid they might be expelled.

"Please Professor." Hermione said quietly. "They were looking for me." Harry felt pride in Hermione at that point.

"Miss Granger?" Dumbledore asked quietly.

"I went looking for the troll. I read about them and I thought I could deal with it on my own. If they hadn't come to find me... I would properly be dead. Ron managed to levitate its club and knock it out before it did us any harm." Harry felt a weight lift of his chest. They thought Ron sent the club towards the troll. Harry didn't want his wandless abilities becoming public knowledge. They would get suspicious.

"Well in that case..." McGonagall started. "Miss Granger I am very disappointed in you. Five points will be deducted from Gryffindor. If you're not hurt please return to Gryffindor tower. The remainder of the feast is finishing in the houses." Hermione looked at the others then left the bathroom. McGonagall turned to Ron, Neville and Harry. Harry found it really difficult not to smile but managed not to give anything away.

"Well I got to say Mr Weasley not many people could take on a fully grown mountain troll and live to tell the tale of it. Ten points to you Mr Weasley for keeping a cool head and for sheer dumb luck. Mr Potter, Mr Longbottom. Five points each for putting the care and well being of another student before your own. All three of you are great friends towards Hermione. Now run along."

The three of them left the bathroom not without Harry noticing the bloody leg of Professor Snape. They sighed in relief from getting



away from the smell of the troll and in no time they were in front of the fat lady.

"Pig Snout" said Harry and the portrait opened to see a worried looking Hermione.

"Are you guys okay?" Hermione asked.

"Sure we're fine." Neville said "Are you okay?"

"Yeah thanks to you three. And you Ron." She said before pulling them into a hug.

"Not a problem Hermione." Ron said rather awkward. "Look I'm sorry about what I said earlier. I didn't mean it. I just got frustrated that I couldn't get the spell right."

"Oh you're forgiven Ron." Hermione said with a smile on her face. "I mean you just knocked out a troll for me. Thank you all of you." She said nodding towards Harry and Neville.

"We didn't do anything Hermione." Harry said.

"If it weren't for you Harry we wouldn't even have gone after Hermione." Neville said. "I'm the one who really didn't do anything." He said.

"Nonsense." Hermione said "All three of you came for me in risk of your own lives. Thank you."

Neville, Ron and Harry just smiled at her then the four of them went off to get some food.

A/N: heya guys. Estelle and Simon in this chapter say Yahoo! Thanks Hailey jade for reminding me of them. I've tried to get this out before my two week deadline. I completed this non beta'd on Friday so if I do get it out on Sunday say thankyou for Mark to getting it back to me within two days. Hope you all liked it I've worked hard on it over the past two weeks. Hopped you liked the moment with Malfoy I was in the mood to write funny things at that time :P. anyway got to go. Hope you had fun reading. REVIEW PLZ! Hehe I'm going to watch Pirates of the Caribbean 2 tonight, well Friday night. I don't expect you to get this until Sunday. That if I can

persuade mark to do it in extra quick time. Cya and review! Edit:  
Monday isn't to bad is it? Especially as mark was busy over the  
weekend Review!

Disclaimer: I Do Not Own Harry Potter

As the month of November started the weather started to get colder. Which meant that for the upcoming opening match in the quidditch season which was on Saturday, would be very cold. As Wood constantly told them, they needed to get off to a good start if they were going to win the quidditch cup. Hermione was a god send, helping him with his homework when he didn't have time to do it on his own because of the over run quidditch practices. She had also lent him Quidditch through the Ages. He actually for once forgot something and he didn't actually pack his own from Potter Manor.

Harry didn't know how but yet again like last time the news that he was playing seeker got out. He didn't really mind much. He could put up with the snide comments coming from the Slytherins or Malfoy's taunts saying he and his friends would be running underneath him with a mattress.

The day before the game Harry, Ron, Neville, and Hermione were outside sitting around a blue fire that was currently residing in a jar. No one actually knew whether this was allowed or not. But neither of them cared as it kept them warm. Harry looked over to Hermione and noticed how much has changed since the troll was let in. For one thing he knew that before it she definitely wouldn't allow the flame. But now she would. He didn't really understand why she was getting relaxed around the rules. Maybe because the boys had broke some to save her from the troll. Which, incidentally, Harry still felt guilty about.

Harry looked over from Hermione to see Snape limping towards him. 'Ha. He's still hurt, good.' Harry thought as Snape got closer to them, looking at them as though he was trying to tell them off for something. The four of them naturally moved closer around the flame so that Snape couldn't see it.

"Is that a library book Potter?" Snape sneered. "They're not allowed outdoors. What is it with you Potter? Think you're above the rules do you? Ten points from Gryffindor. Now hand it over and head to your next class. You don't want to be late.

Deciding that he would rather not argue with the potions master for now Harry handed over the book and Snape limped away.

"What's wrong with his leg?" Neville asked as they all got up of the ground to head to their next lesson. Ron just shrugged whilst Hermione and Harry gave each other an unknowing look.

The Gryffindor common room that evening was busy and excited about tomorrow's game against Slytherin. Harry was getting extremely nervous about the game. He knew that they won it last time. And Harry was definitely a better flyer this time around. Especially with all those years of experience of playing the quidditch games. But unlike everything else, quidditch games you couldn't rely on to be the same. If Harry flew one way instead of the way he flew the first time around the whole outcome of the match could change. Harry knew that his future knowledge wouldn't help him in this match. This match was just another whole new game.

"Harry, stop fidgeting. You're making us nervous as well." Hermione said.

"Well if I had something to read maybe I would have something to keep my mind off things." Harry replied.

Neville looked up at Harry and then at his watch. "I'll be right back." Neville said before hurrying out of the portrait hole.

"Where the hell is he going?" Ron asked. Harry merely just shrugged whilst looking around the common room.

"God Harry do something rather than just sitting there." Hermione said.

"What though? It's nearly curfew so I can't really do anything now." Harry complained.

Fifteen minutes later Neville came back into the common room looking like he had just run the whole way. He came towards them, flopped down in the chair that he had left then flung a book at Harry.

"Here you go mate." Neville said out of breath.

Harry looked down at the book and noticed it was 'Quidditch through the Ages.'

"You went and got it off Snape?" Harry replied in awe.

Neville soon got his breath back and nodded. "But that's not what I needed to talk to you about. Ron, you know how you asked earlier what was wrong with Snape's leg." Ron just nodded. "He was bitten. But not just any bite. It came from a three headed dog. The three headed dog from the third floor corridor. I think his exact words were. 'Blasted thing, how are you supposed to keep your eyes on all three heads at once?' He tried to get past the dog to get whatever it's guarding. Whatever Dumbledore is trying to guard. He's trying to steal it guys."

Hermione looked at Neville with wide eyes. "No, he-he wouldn't, he's a teacher. Grant you not a very nice teacher but still a teacher." Hermione said.

"Come on Hermione!" Ron said "Were not in the land of perfect teachers here. I agree with Neville. Snape's evil. Look at the way he acts towards Gryffindors especially Harry in classes. Come on he is head of Slytherin for god's sake. There isn't a witch or wizard that was bad that wasn't in Slytherin Hermione. Its rumoured you-know-who himself was one."

"You're wrong Ron." Harry said. "I know at least one person that was evil that wasn't in Slytherin. Grant you that, yes, Voldemort..." Ron and Neville flinched at his name. "... was in Slytherin but Petter Pettigrew was in Gryffindor. I'm sure you know about him."

Ron looked at Harry then at the fire. "Yeah, yeah, you're right. Okay so not all bad people are from Slytherin. But most are. And who more so than the head of that house! Just look at the way he acts."

"I agree with Ron." Neville said "Snape's definitely evil. But what is he after, what is the dog guarding."

"That's just it Neville." Hermione said "We just don't know."

The next morning Harry woke up bright and early. He arrived in the great hall before anyone else although he didn't eat anything. Soon he would be out on that quidditch pitch doing what he knew he could do best. Flying. Soon the rest of the Gryffindors had made their way down to breakfast although Harry still, in that time, hadn't eaten anything.

"Harry, eat something." Stressed Hermione.

"I'm not hungry Hermione." Harry replied.

Seamus who was sitting near him leaned over. "Harry mate. You need your strength. Seekers are always the ones that get the worse injuries. They are always targeted by the other players.

"Thanks Seamus." Harry replied "Your pep talk has made me full of confidence."

Come ten forty-five Harry was sitting in his quidditch gear in the changing rooms listening to Wood's pre-match pep talk.

"Ok men." Said Wood.

"And women" corrected Angelina.

"Yeah that's it, and women." Corrected Wood. "This is it." Wood said before being interrupted by the twins.

"The big One." Fred said.

"The one we've all been waiting for." Continued George.

"Will you two please shut up!" Wood shouted at them. "This is the best team I've seen Gryffindor have in years. I know we can win that quidditch cup. So go out there and fly like I know you lot can. We're going to win this match." Wood finished. Wood looked at his watch. "Right, it's time. Good luck and get us that win."

Harry walked out of the changing rooms and onto the pitch. The whole school like usual turned up for the game. Madam Hooch was standing by the box that contained the balls, waiting for them to stand around her. "Now I want a nice clean game, from all of you." Directing the 'you' towards Marcus Flint who just sneered. Harry looked into the stands to see Ron, Neville and Hermione under a massive banner saying Potter for President.

"Mount your brooms please." Madam Hooch called out. Harry clambered onto his Nimbus. Madam Hooch brought the whistle to her mouth, blew and all of a sudden 15 brooms shot into the air.

"And the Quaffle is taken immediately by Angelina Johnson. An excellent chaser. Rather an attractive one too...." Lee Jordan the commentator announced.

"JORDAN!" shouted Professor McGonagall. Harry shook his head. It was amazing that it was always the smalls thing he missed the most. Without really knowing it either. Well missed the most after Ginny of course.

Harry zoned out of the commentary to concentrate on catching the snitch. He flew to the other end of the pitch looking for the snitch. All of a sudden a bludger headed his way and he pointed his broom upwards and shot up just narrowly avoiding the collision.

George who was chasing after it called out to him. "Watch out Harry, that nearly had you off."

After about a further fifteen minutes of searching for the snitch Harry managed to spot a glint of gold by the Gryffindors goal posts and shot after it. Harry flattened himself onto the broom, willing it to go faster. Harry was closing the gap between himself and the snitch. Harry managed a glance at the stands where the Gryffindors were at and saw Hagrid, Neville Ron, and Hermione watching him.

"I think Harry's seen the snitch!" shouted Ron over the noise of the crowd. It was currently sixty to twenty in favour of Gryffindor. Harry was then joined by the Slytherin seeker so he put on an extra burst of speed. All of a sudden the seeker pulled up. Harry looked over his shoulder to wonder why the Slytherin seeker would act like this when all of a sudden. WHAM! Harry had just flown straight into Markus Flint.

Harry's broom flew off out of Harry's control. Whilst the Gryffindors shouted "FOUL!"

Harry heard the whistle of Madam Hooch and then her voice repeating what the Gryffindors had just called out. Harry turned to watch Alicia as she flew towards the goals of the Slytherins, ready to take the Penalty.

"So after that obvious disgusting cheat by..." Jordan said.

"Jordan!" Harry could hear McGonagall's voice growl.

"I mean after that open and revolting foul..." Jordan corrected.

"I'm warning you Jordan if you can't stop yourself taking sides..." McGonagall's voice was heard again."

Harry zoned out of the commentary again and watched Alicia score the penalty taking the score to 120-40 in Gryffindors favour. Harry needed to find that snitch. If Slytherin seeker captured the snitch now Gryffindor would lose. Gryffindor won last time around and there was no way in hell that Harry was going to let the Slytherin seeker change that this time. Harry flew high up into the air to allow himself to get a better view of the pitch and make it easier for him to find the snitch when his broom lurched, throwing him off. Harry managed to keep hold with one hand though otherwise that would have been a very bad fall. Harry knew exactly what was going on as the broom lurched again. Harry's hand that was holding on was sweaty and it was losing grip. Harry instantly started mumbling the counter curse.

"What the 'ell does 'arry think ee's doin up there?" Hagrid said more to himself rather than to the others. Instantly Ron and Neville who was watching the chasers looked up to see Harry holding on with one hand whilst his broom was bucking and flying higher and higher. All of a sudden the broom did one last buck and the hand Harry was holding the broom on slipped. There was a loud noise of screams around the stand as they saw this but Harry's other hand, that wasn't holding on before, suddenly shot up and grabbed hold of the broom and stopping him from falling well over a hundred feet. Harry muttered the counter curse more urgently and put more magic into it. The combination of both Harry's and Snape's counter curse was making it easier for Harry. He managed to swing his leg over the broom and he was sitting on it correctly now.

All of a sudden the broom started to roll over and over again making Harry ever so dizzy. Because of the dizziness he couldn't cast the counter curse very well.

"Did something happen to his broom when Flint knocked into him?" Seamus asked, who was sitting near Neville, Ron and Hermione.

"Can't 'ave." Hagrid said his voice sounding rather shaky and croaky. "Nothin but very powerful dark magic can intervene with a



broomstick. No kid, even if it is a Slytherin, could do tha' to a Nimbus two thousand."

Hermione brought her binoculars up to her face and scanned the crowd. "Ron, Neville look at Snape!" Hermione said to them. Ron and Neville brought their own binoculars up to their eyes and saw Snape in the stands muttering words under his breath. His eyes never leaving Harry.

"He's jinxing the broom!" Neville said. Looking shocked towards Hermione.

"What do we do?" Ron said fear in his voice.

"Leave it to me" Hermione whispered. She fought her way past the now much scared spectators. Hermione reached Professor Snape and bent down so no one could see her. "Lacarnum Inflamarae" Hermione whispered and bright blue flames shot out of her wand and caused Snape's robes to catch fire. It took him a full two minutes to take notice that his robes was burning by which time Hermione was already back with Ron, Neville, and Hagrid. Snape by the shock of seeing his robes catch fire staggered backwards and knocked Quirrell over, forcing him to lose eye contact with Harry. Snape managed to stamp out the flames and turn to look up at Harry to watch him go into a dive.

Harry after noticing that his broom had stopped bucking forced it around and flew to the other end of the pitch farthest away from Quirrell, making it harder for him to put the curse on his broom again.

Harry turned to look at what the chasers were doing when again he saw a glint of gold down near the pitch. Harry ignoring everything else around him went into a spectacular dive. He was getting closer to it. Harry heard a bludger heading towards him and yet again Harry, like last practice had to do a sloth grip roll to avoid the bludger. Harry's world turned itself upside down then the right way up again as he completed the roll this time not landing on the grass. Harry stretched out his arm and felt his hand go around the snitch, its wings beaten ferociously against Harry's hand. There was a massive roar from the Gryffindor stands as Harry just managed to pull up from the dive, this time managing to avoid the ground.

The sounds of cheering coming from the Gryffindor stands was to Harry like a jumbo jet taking off and himself was standing on the runway. After about ten minutes Harry managed to drag himself away and over to Ron, Hermione, Neville and Hagrid.

"Follow us." Hermione said as Hagrid led them down to his hut.

Once inside the hut Harry sat by the fire listening to what Ron, Neville and Hermione had to say.

"It was Snape, Harry. We three saw him." Ron said nodding his head towards Hermione and Neville.

"It was Neville who worked out that it was Snape jinxing your broom. He was muttering some curse. He couldn't take his eyes off you." Hermione explained.

"Rubbish." Hagrid said. "Snape is a 'ogwarts teacher. Ee wouldna do a thin' like that."

"We found out something about him Hagrid." Neville said whilst looking at the other three, silently asking whether they should say this in front of him.

"We found out he tried to get past that three headed dog on Halloween." Ron said answering Neville's question. "He was trying to steal whatever it was it's guarding."

"How do you four know about Fluffy?" Hagrid asked shocked.

"Fluffy?" Neville said looking at Hagrid in shock

"That thing has a name?" Hermione asked shock in her voice.

"Yeah, 'e's mine. Bought 'im of a Greek chappie I met in a pub las' year. Then I lent 'im to Dumbledore to guard the..."

"Yes?" Harry said although he knew exactly what it was guarding.

"Don' ask me anymore questions." Hagrid said "Tha's top secret that is."

"But whatever Fluffy's guarding Snape is trying to steal it." Ron said exasperated.

"Rubbish, like I said Snape is a 'ogwarts teacher, he'd do nothin' of the sort." Hagrid said

"But he just tried to kill Harry." Hermione said "If he's capable of killing someone then he's capable of stealing what ever that dog of yours is guarding."

"Now lookie 'ere. I'm telling you yer wrong!" Hagrid said his temper starting to raise. "I 'aven't got a clue why 'arry's broom acted the way it did. I don't care what you say, Snape wouldn't try and kill a student."

'You know I bet he would if he knew he would get away of it. I mean he killed Dumbledore in the future.' Harry thought.

"Now listen to me all four of yeh. Yer guys are meddilin' in things that donna concern yeh. Forget about Fluffy an' forget what he's guardin'." Hagrid said "That's between Dumbledore and Nicholas Flamel..."

"Who's Nicholas Flamel?" Neville asked.

Hagrid looked furious with himself. "I should not of said that. I should not of said that."

A/N heya gusy I know I know a very short chapter but next chapy is x-mas and x-mas and quidditch in my opinion really didn't go together plus you get a new chapter in the space of one week! How cool is that. Heck you might get it in the space of three days if mark beat reads it quickly but don't count on it :P not that I'm blaming him. Its alright if he don't. next chapter is Christmas and I tell you now its going to be different! Completely different! Heck Harry might not even stay in Hogwarts...c ya and review please pleas pretty please review! I want about thirty reviews for this chapter if you don't mind hehe c ya guys and hopped you liked it. Edit: don't expect the next chapter for about another four weeks. Sorry but thats just the way it is :(

Disclaimer: I Do Not Own Harry Potter

As Christmas drew nearer, so Harry's plan for Christmas became more important. About one week before the Christmas holidays started he got a letter from Sirius saying that his plans were all in order and should be fine. Harry smiled. He had a tradition that he did every single Christmas ever since he came back from the future. This year, he told himself, wouldn't be any different.

It was a week before Christmas and all the students were restless as it was their last lesson on a Friday morning. So low and behold on their last day of term and also the coldest day so far of the winter they found themselves in Snape's dungeon. Harry was sitting with his usual partner Neville, whilst Ron and Hermione were paired together. Harry was just cutting some ingredients up when he overheard Malfoy talking.

"I do feel so sorry for those who have to stay here for the holidays because they're either too scared to go home, afraid that their guardian might murder them or their family just couldn't afford to have them home for Christmas." Malfoy said.

Ron instantly went berserk at these words and it took Hermione, Neville and Harry to hold him back. Harry was even tempted to use some magic to stop Ron from doing anything drastic. Harry was indeed like last time staying at Hogwarts for the Christmas holidays. However he did have something different planned for Christmas Day. Ron however managed to calm down when Snape started to walk over to them.

"Weasley, Potter, Longbottom, Granger. What the hell do you think you're doing? Five points each from Gryffindor for fighting. Now get back to work." Snape sneered before continuing along the isle to look at other people's potions.

Malfoy had turned really bad ever since Harry had won the quidditch match for Gryffindor against Slytherin. Although this time there was no wide mouth tree frog jokes that Malfoy told last time around. An hour and a half later they left the dungeons and came out of the passageway into the entrance hall where they saw Hagrid pulling along a tree.

"Hey Hagrid." Neville called out.

"Want any help Hagrid?" Ron asked.

"Nah I'll manage thanks Ron." Hagrid replied and he lent the tree against the wall.

"Well, well well, Weasley." Came the drawl of Malfoy's voice behind them "Trying to earn some extra cash are we? You better watch it you great big oaf. Weasley here is after your job. I bet his hut is so cosy compared to your house Weasley. I hear that you all live in one room. Is that true?" Malfoy rambled on.

Ron tried to attack him again whilst Neville and Hermione held him back.

"Leave it Ron." Hermione said. Harry however ignored Ron and turned to look at Malfoy.

"I don't know what you see in them Potter. You have nothing in common. Apart from the obvious fact that you four are the most dishonourable witch and wizards I have ever known. You've got a mudblood, blood traitor and two squibs. Really if father had his way all four of you would be chucked out with Dumbledore to boot. I really don't understand it. I mean they're all poor. Why don't you make friends with shall I say, the people who have more prestige." Malfoy said.

"Money isn't everything Malfoy." Harry replied.

"People who say that are the people who are very poor." Malfoy replied

"Yes but isn't it weird that I'm richer than you. Not that money matters hey Malfoy." Harry sneered.

Malfoy looked daggers at Harry. "What's the matter Malfoy? Run out of insults?" Harry asked. "I suggest you leave us alone if you know what's good for you. This is the last time I'm warning you."

"What are you going to do Potter?" Malfoy asked "Shoot sparks out of your wand at me. Your threats mean nothing anymore Potter. You see unlike you I can do magic. I haven't seen you do one spell since you arrived here.

Harry lifted his wand so it pointed straight at Malfoy's face. "Then shall we test that theory of yours Malfoy? I'm sure I could get you to see one."

"POTTER" Came Snapes voice from the entrance to the dungeons. Harry dropped his wand to his side as Snape came striding over to them.

"He was provoked Professor Snape." Hagrid said defending the four of them. "Malfoy was insulting them. Malfoy insulted Ron's family professor."

"Be as that may, fighting and magic in the corridors is strictly forbidden." Snape said

"But we aren't in the corridors sir. We are in the entrance hall." Harry corrected Snape. Harry knew he was going to pay for that remark.

Snape looked at Harry. "Twenty points from Gryffindor for your cheek Potter and if you say one more word it will be detention for a whole week with me in the dungeons. Now move along all of you. Oh and five points from Gryffindor for Weasley's behaviour also." With that Malfoy and Snape left.

"Why can't Snape just leave? Hey maybe he'll get fired for trying to steal whatever Fluffy is hiding." Ron said.

"Yeh still on that. I told ya to drop it." Hagrid said. Hagrid picked up the tree and walked into the great hall.

"Ah, Hagrid the last tree, put it over there would you?" McGonagall asked. Once Hagrid put it in the corner McGonagall had asked him to Hagrid turned back to Harry and the other three.

"How many days left 'til the holiday's now?" Hagrid asked.

"Just the one Hagrid." Hermione said "Which reminds me we need to head toward the library.

"Library? Just before the holidays? A bit keen ain't ya?" Hagrid asked.

"Well its not like Harry or Neville could do any harm by it." Hermione said causing protests from the two boys. "But we're not going there for school work. We're trying to find out who Nicholas Flamel is."

"Ye what!" Hagrid said nearly shouting. "Listen 'ere, I've told ya to drop it too many times. Ye got no business into what that dog is guardin'."

"We're just looking for Nicholas Flamel. We just want to know who he is." Hermione said innocently.

"You know Hagrid, you could just tell us who he is and what the dog is guarding." Harry said. "It would save us a hell lot of trouble trying to find it."

"I wouldn't tell no one what Fluffy is guarding and that includes you lot. I wouldn't want to break Dumbledore's trust in me." Hagrid replied.

"Well then we will find out for ourselves." Ron said.

"See ya Hagrid." Neville said and with that the four of them headed to the library. After the half an hour of looking in the library they went to enjoy lunch in the great hall. Hermione was leaving the next morning so this afternoon would be the last afternoon the four of them were together.

Come the next morning. Hermione said goodbye to the three of them before getting into the Thestral drawn carriage. Harry looked at the Thestrals. They were the same as ever. Most people thought they were evil and if you saw them then it meant trouble for you. Harry of course knew better.

"What you looking at?" Ron asked.

"Oh, what nothing." Harry lied. He didn't really want to explain the thestrals at that precise moment. Plus how would he explain that he had seen someone die.

Hermione poked her head out of the door. "You three will keep looking for Flamel won't you? Send me an owl if you find anything."

"Sure Hermione and you could ask your parents about him. It'd be safe to ask them." Ron said.

"Yes Ron, they're both muggles and work as dentists, I think it would be very safe to ask them. However I just have a feeling that they might not know the answer." Hermione said sarcastically.

"Sorry Hermione." Ron said lowering his chin.

"Oh honestly Ron, use that brain of yours for once. And Harry you really need to get some studying done this break." Hermione said.

"Yes ma'am!" Harry said saluting her. Hermione just shook her head before the Thestral drawn carriage took her off towards Hogsmeade station and the Hogwarts express.

Most of the holidays were spent playing chess or lounging by the fire. Harry was getting better and better at wizard chess. Truthfully he had more experience than Ron did but that didn't mean he was as good as Ron. He had only beaten him once out of ten games. Neville was getting good at chess as well. He was close on par with Harry. Harry and Neville had a long, thought out battle which lasted nearly four hours before Harry could checkmate Neville's king with his rook and queen.

Come Christmas Eve Harry was getting very nervous about the next day. What if it didn't work? What if the ministry said no? Of course Sirius already said it was all okay. But Harry still felt a little nervous. He wondered what Ginny's reaction would be. He supposed that he would just find out soon enough.

Harry went early to bed Christmas Eve. He set his magic to wake him up at three o'clock in the morning and he wanted to be there for when she woke up. Harry wrote a note to Ron and Neville explaining that Dumbledore had come to collect him because Sirius wanted to spend Christmas day with him. Then after collecting Ginny's, Mrs Weasley's and Sirius's presents from the pile at the end of his bed, he slipped out of the common room and along the hall until he reached the secret room in which Estelle and Simon were hidden.

"Morning Harry." Estelle said.

"Yeah right I'm still half asleep." Harry thought back.



"SIMON" Harry shouted in Parseltongue.

"God Harry no need to shout, I'm up I'm up." Simon said sleepily, slithering his way over to Harry. Simon wrapped himself around Harry's arm and Harry let his sleeve come down over Simon. No one would know he would be there without someone actually grabbing his arm.

"You know Simon, we could actually do this more often. That is of course if you could keep quiet for long enough." Harry said "You are actually well hidden."

"Me keep quiet, but I love talking." Simon said with a chuckle

"Trust me I know." Harry said shaking his head.

"Estelle, to Potter Manor please!" Harry said out loud. Estelle flew over and Harry grabbed her tail feathers. In a flash of fire Harry found himself in the kitchen of his home. Harry looked around and noticed that it was still all dark.

"Oh please don't tell me that Sirius is still in bed." Harry said out loud, more to himself than to Estelle or Simon.

Harry walked out of the kitchen, into the hallway and up the stairs. Rather than turning right to go towards his own bedroom, he turned left to head towards Sirius's. He passed the master bedroom which was Harry's parents and to the second biggest bedroom right next to it. Both Harry and Sirius agreed that the master bedroom should be left alone and no one would use it. It was his parent's bedroom. He didn't think he would feel comfortable using it. Or even Sirius for that matter, even though he thought Sirius was like a father to him.

He walked into Sirius's bedroom and saw him fast asleep. Harry took out his wand and flicked it towards Sirius. A jet of water came out of the end and splashed onto Sirius's face causing him to wake up rather fast.

"What the hell?" Sirius exclaimed before noticing Harry.

"Just be glad I didn't set you on fire like last time as well." Harry said before starting to head out of the room. "Get up, I want to be there early."

"Fine, fine I'm getting up." Sirius mumbled before heading towards the bathroom in his PJ's.

Half an hour later found Harry eating some bacon sandwiches whilst Sirius came into the kitchen.

"You couldn't do me any?" Sirius asked.

"I thought you said in the last letter you were on a diet?" Harry asked.

"Up until Christmas. However early it is it is still Christmas therefore my diet over." Sirius complained.

"You know where the bacon and bread is then. Just don't be too long, I want to be there for seven." Harry reminded Sirius.

"Harry the floo network is just over there it won't take us ten minutes to get to the ministry then the portkey lasts what, ten twenty seconds?" Sirius said.

"Yes I know. I just want to be there early that's all." Harry said.

"You never did tell me why this is so important." Sirius said.

"Never mind Sirius." Harry said before changing the subject.

Come four o'clock Harry and Sirius were both ready. Simon was wrapped around Harry's arm whilst Estelle was on the perch in the kitchen. Another perch in which Harry didn't know where she got it from. Although it might have been the same one.

"Right then Harry." Sirius said pulling the rack sack over his shoulder. "Time to go."

Harry walked up to the fireplace and grabbed a pinch of floo powder before stepping into the fire. "Do I really have to go this way? There's three other ways I could get there. Estelle, Apparating, Wind Travel. I hate Floo Powder. Surely I can go a different way." Harry moaned.

"Apparating you're legally not allowed to do yet so you could get into trouble for it if you're caught. Estelle I thought you wanted to keep a secret so I take it risking someone seeing her takes that out of the equation. And what's wind travel?" Sirius asked.

"Oh err never mind. Floo powder it is." Harry said before throwing the powder down and shouting. "MINISTRY OF MAGIC." All of a sudden Harry felt the rather recognisable feeling of sickness as grates flew past him. Harry, with a jolt, was thrown out of the fireplace and onto the marble floor he recognised that was in the Ministry of Magic.

Suddenly there was a loud crack as Sirius apparated next to him. "You really need to learn to land on your feet mate." Sirius said to him, helping him up. Harry turned to look around the room. It was deadly silent. Not compared to when he first came to the ministry during the summer between his fourth or fifth year. There was only one person in the hall.

"Mr Black" he said "My name is Steven. I took it upon myself to bring the portkey here rather than you two having to come down to the offices. It should activate in five minutes."

"Thank you, that's very kind of you. And we apologise for you having to get up so early on Christmas day." Sirius said.

"So it's just a one day thing this then? I notice here you've got a return portkey booked at eight o'clock GMT. Ten o'clock their time." Steven asked.

"Yeah just visiting some family over Christmas day. You know how it is." Sirius said.

"Certainly." Steven replied. "Okay it's time, grab hold."

Sirius and Harry stepped forward and grabbed hold of the Wellington boot. They waited for a minute before Harry felt the jerk behind his navel thrusting him forwards telling him the portkey was working. Just as soon as it started it stopped and Harry felt his legs give way as they hit solid ground and he toppled over to the ground.

"Welcome to Romania. The time is currently Six Fifty Five." Harry heard a voice say.

Harry looked up to see a rather tall looking person in red crimson robes standing outside a shut gate which Harry immediately recognised as the dragon reserve.

"My name is Craig. What can I do for you?" The man said.

"We're here to see Charlie Weasley" Sirius said.

"Ah yes Charlie I know him, a good fella. You'll find him in the hotel just a couple of miles south of here."

"I thought they were staying actually in the reserve." Harry muttered.

"They...?" Craig asked. "...oh you must mean his parents and sister. Yes they are here but it is our custom for Christmas to send all our workers that aren't working home or to the nearest hotel. Fully paid of course. Unfortunately Charlie is on duty tomorrow so we couldn't send him home so his family has come out to see him. Rather nice of them, I think. So like I said you will find the hotel a couple of miles south of here. Can you side apparate?" he asked Sirius. Sirius just nodded as Craig handed over the address. "Apparating point is just over there." He said pointing to a group of trees. Once hidden amongst the trees Harry looked at the parchment that had the address on it.

"You ready Harry?" Sirius asked. Harry just nodded and then before Sirius could even touch him with a loud crack Harry apparated to the address.

Harry found himself in front of a huge white building with lots of windows. It looked like a really posh hotel. There was no one around which for Harry was lucky as it looked like a muggle hotel. With a loud crack Sirius joined him.

"You know that was very foolish of you. What if someone had seen?" Sirius said reprimanding Harry.

"Ah come on Sirius lighten up, it's Christmas." Harry replied.

With a shake of Sirius's head they walked into the main foyer of the hotel and over to where the receptionist was working.

"Excuse me." Sirius said "We're looking for the Weasleys. Could you tell us which room they are in?" The receptionist looked up at Sirius then back at her computer. "Exc.." Sirius stared again before Harry elbowed him in the stomach, causing him to stop.

"What is up with him?" The receptionist asked.

"Oh you know just stomach cramp. You should never go running just after you've eaten." Harry said smiling at her.

"Going out to run in this cold weather. You're lucky it's not snowing yet. Apparently it should start soon. Sometime this morning I think. Their room is 1126. Fourth floor. Have a good day." The receptionist said.

Sirius and Harry walked away and whilst Sirius headed for the stairs Harry headed to the elevator. "Sirius, over here, don't use the stairs." Harry called out to him.

"How else are we meant to get up there?" Sirius asked.

"Hello, elevator!" Harry said "Don't tell me you don't know how to use one. They actually have one in the Ministry of Magic."

"Er well you see last time I went to the ministry, not including this morning, was for my... well I can't say trial cause I didn't have one. And I didn't really use the elevator then." Sirius said not looking too happy. Sirius very rarely said anything about the time he spent in Azkaban. Whenever it was brought up he just ignored the conversation until the subject was changed.

"Oh." Harry said as he pressed the button for the fourth floor. "What was it like in Azkaban? You told me once last time around but not in full detail."

"Because I don't want you to know that's why. It's the most terrible place on earth. Especially when you've got Dementors outside your door twenty four seven. The perks of the high security cells. You get at least one Dementors by your door at all times." Sirius explained.

Harry decided to leave it, the elevator all of a sudden made a pinging noise indicating they had reached the fourth floor and the doors opened. Harry and Sirius walked out and heard the doors close behind them.

"Which way now Harry?" Sirius asked.

Harry went to the nearest door. He saw it was number 1114, turning left he saw the next room was number 1113. He stopped and turned around almost walking into Sirius.

Harry chuckled and shrugged. "Oops wrong way. Got to go the other way." Two minutes later they came to the room the Weasleys were staying in. Harry tried the door but it was locked.

"Knock then?" Sirius asked raising his hand. Harry grabbed his wrist so that Sirius couldn't knock on the door.

"Are you mad, its quarter past seven in the morning." Harry said.

"So what was the point in getting here early?" Sirius complained.

"Well after the fact that it would annoy the hell out of you, I want to be here when Ginny wakes up. That could be in ten minutes or in a couple of hours. But the fact that it's Christmas I would think the ten minutes is more appropriate." Harry said.

"So we have to wait out here?" Sirius moaned.

"Are you a wizard or not." Harry asked before apparating into the room.

Harry heard Sirius apparate next to him as he looked around the room. At the moment they were standing in the kitchen area of the room. It had an oven and stove, both electric ones. 'Mr Weasley must be having a field day with those' Harry thought. Harry looked at the living room area and saw two couch's which at that precise moment looked very comfortable. Sirius also thought the same thing as he dragged himself over to the nearest one and dropped down onto it, closing his eyes. His legs stretched out along the sofa so he took up all of it. Harry noticed that they had glass doors leading out onto the balcony and low and behold Harry could see little flakes of snow starting to fall. Harry instantly hummed Bing Crosby's 'White

Christmas' as he sat down onto the other couch. In the corner of the room there was a tree decorated and presents underneath the tree. Closing his eyes he smiled as he pictured Ginny's face once she had woken up and come into the living room.

Harry stayed like that listening to Sirius's snores for half an hour before he heard the door open to his left. He looked up to see Ginny heading straight to the tree and the presents, not noticing Harry or Sirius in the room.

"MUM, DAD, CHARLIE, IT'S CHRISTMAS!" she shouted as she threw herself onto the floor next the presents and started to search through them. Harry heard a chuckle come from the door Ginny had just came from and saw Charlie stop dead in his tracks when he noticed Harry and Sirius on the couches. He looked over to Ginny to see her still sifting through the presents, oblivious to the extra two people in the room. Harry got up of the sofa and headed over to Charlie.

"How long do you reckon before she notices me being here?" Harry asked Charlie in a whisper.

Charlie suddenly grinned at him "As long as it takes to find the present you got her. She said last night that was the present she was going to open first." He whispered back so Ginny couldn't hear them.

"Well she's going to have to search hard then. It's still in Sirius's rucksack." Harry told him.

At that moment the door that must be Mr and Mrs Weasley's room opened and Harry saw them coming out in the dressing gowns. They too stopped dead when they saw Sirius on the couch and Harry standing talking to Charlie. Surprise was clearly written on their faces. Harry just smiled at them as he walked to the bag on the floor next to Sirius.

He opened it up and dug to the bottom where Ginny's present was, using the arm Simon wasn't wrapped around. He felt his fingers wrap around her present and he withdrew his hand to see a rectangle shape box.

"Mummy!" Ginny said disappointed. "I can't see Harry's present. He said he wouldn't forget me."

Mrs Weasley chuckled a little before saying. "I don't think he's forgotten you love."

"But where's his present." Ginny said hurt in her voice. Harry decided that enough was enough and he gently threw the present over to Ginny so it landed in her lap. Ginny looked at the present for a second before looking up and finally noticing Harry and Sirius in the room. Harry saw the emotion on her face go from hurt to shock then happiness all in the space of a second. She dropped Harry's present on the floor and jumped up running straight at Harry.

"Harry!" she screamed as she put her arms around Harry's neck and giving him a big hug. Harry got lost in the smell of Ginny's hair as he just held onto her for all its worth. It was funny, Harry thought as he felt happiness spread through him from hugging his wife, that you never know how much you could miss someone until you finally see them again after a long absence. Of course Harry had missed Ginny. But he never knew he missed her this much.

"Merry Christmas Ginny." Harry said softly as he broke the hug.

"What are you doing here?" Ginny asked her smile wider than Harry had ever seen it.

"Well I came to see you of course. In your last letter you said that you missed me and thought that I might forget you. Know Ginny that I could never forget you, never." Harry replied pushing back a strand of hair that had come across her face behind her ear. "So are you going to open your present? Charlie said that was the one you wanted to open first."

"Harry you know our custom." Came Mrs Weasley's voice. Harry turned to look at her and noticed that her smile was, if possible, larger than Ginny's. "No opening presents before breakfast. Ginny love, go get dressed so we can go downstairs to have some breakfast. You can open Harry's present after that."

"But mum." Ginny whined "Can't I just open Harry's. Just this once." Ginny used the puppy dog eyes that Harry got accustomed to her



using on him when they were older. However Mrs Weasley stood firm.

"After breakfast love. Just think of Harry being here as a present all on its own." Mrs Weasley said gently.

Ginny sighed as she walked towards her bedroom. "Fine" she muttered before closing the door behind her.

"God she can be stubborn when she wants to be can't she." Charlie said.

"Tell me about it." Mrs Weasley said before walking over to Harry and giving him a massive hug. "It's good to see you Harry."

"Thanks mum." Harry said without thinking. In the future, when Harry and Ginny got engaged, Mrs Weasley told Harry that under no circumstance was he ever to call her anything else now apart from mum. Which Harry in turn was happily to oblige. Harry's instinct was to still call her mum. How he managed to last all these years without calling her it Harry never knew. He was kicking himself for slipping up. "I mean mm I mean..." Harry tried to right it.

"Harry." Mrs Weasley said. "If you want to call me mum call me it. I think of you as my child anyway. A Weasley through and through. Now I'm not trying to replace your mother. God knows no one can do that. You always will be your mother's son. Your eyes tell us all that. But I do love you as though you were my own son. To us you are our son. Not trying to take anything away from Sirius or your parents. Why do you thing we gave you a hand on our clock? If you want to call me mum call me it. If you want to call Arthur dad. Call him it. We would never replace your real parents. But we love you as much has we love Ginny or Ron or the others."

"Even Fred and George." Harry croaked out. He was repeatedly telling himself. 'You're not going to cry, you're not going to cry.'

Mrs Weasley laughed out loud. "Even them."

Harry wiped his eyes with his hands. Sniffing a bit. "Thanks mum. You really don't know how much this means to me."

"Probably just as much as it means to us when we hear you call us mum or dad." Mr Weasley said. Harry looked over to Sirius and saw that he was beaming so brightly that Harry thought that they could use him as a lighthouse. However when he looked at Ginny she wasn't as ecstatic as Harry thought she would be. She had walked back into the room in the middle of what Mrs Weasley was saying.

"Right, breakfast I think. Then you can open your present Ginny." Mrs Weasley said. Ginny lowered her head slightly and mumbled something. Once Mr and Mrs Weasley got dressed they left the room and headed along the corridor Harry noticed that Ginny and Mrs Weasley lagged behind a little. Harry slowed down to hear what they were saying.

"Oh dear." Mrs Weasley said. "Of course you can still date him. Just because he sees us as his parents doesn't necessarily mean he sees you as a sister. If you want my opinion, Harry cares for you just as much as you care for him."

"Harry never will see me as that mum. But I want him to so much. I really like him mum." Ginny said.

"I know you do dear and like I said, be patient. Boys can be really thick headed sometimes. You do have Ron as a brother don't you. And it isn't like Harry doesn't know you care for him. He knows how you feel and he still hangs around you. He still comes to see you. Hey just think of what he is doing today." Mrs Weasley tried to cheer up Ginny. "Don't give up on him love. Not just yet. If I am to be honest I actually think you're too young for these feelings. Not that they're wrong love." She hastily added when she saw the hurt cross Ginny's face. "It's just that boys don't normally take interests in this sort of thing until they're slightly older. I'm not saying wait forever. Just wait a little while longer. Okay love?"

"Thanks mum. You're the best mum in the world." Ginny said smiling at her.

When the five of them got down to the restaurant they noticed that they were the first ones down there. They sat themselves down at the nearest table and waited for the waiter. When he came they ordered five big brunches.

"So what were your plans for today?" Sirius said once they had started to eat their breakfast.

"Well dinner is at six which we will want to come to. When are you going home? Are you staying the night or rest of the week?" Mrs Weasley asked.

"Unfortunately the portkey is scheduled to take us back at eight o'clock." Sirius said.

"Mm if the dinner is at six and its Christmas dinner it might last longer than two hours." Mrs Weasley thought. "Which means you might not be able to come.

Harry just shook his head at Sirius's mistake. "The portkey takes us back at eight o'clock England time. That is ten o'clock Romanian time. Do you think dinner will be finished by then Mrs Weasley?"

"Oh yes of course it will be." Mrs Weasley said smiling. "That's really good. Now what do you and Ginny want to do?"

"Prezzies!" Ginny and Harry said together.

"I did mean after the presents you know." Mrs Weasley said turning back to her breakfast.

Harry looked over to Ginny. "So what you want to do after you opened your present's gin?"

"Don't know, what is there to do around here?" Ginny replied.

"Tell you two what." Charlie said speaking up. "How about a tour of the dragon reserve. I know you've already seen them Ginny but Harry here hasn't.

"I get to see the little baby dragons again?" Ginny said.

Charlie chuckled. "Yes Ginny, you can see the baby dragons again."

"Then I'm up for it." Ginny exclaimed. "What about you Harry, up to see some dragons? Not too chicken are you."

"Dragons sound fine. I here you've got a Hungarian Horntail over here." Harry said.

"Yeah we do." Charlie said. "Although I doubt you'll be seeing her. They're the most vicious type of dragons you can come across they are. We got some Peruvian Vipertooth. Some grown up. Some baby ones what Ginny was just talking about. We've also got a couple of Romanian Longhorns. Obviously native to this country. That should take up most of the day. You okay with that mum, dad?"

"Sure." Mrs Weasley said. "They've got a nice spa here apparently."

"With plugs!" Mr Weasley said which caused Mrs Weasley to shake her head.

"Mr Weasley, there are different kind of plugs to the ones you collect. You know electricity and water don't mix very well." Harry explained.

"If they're different then why are they called the same? Muggles, they're so fascinating. You know I want to know what the function of a rubber duck is also. No one actually knows the answer." Mr Weasley said. "I wonder if the receptionist knows."

Harry had an image in his head then of Mr Weasley talking to the receptionist and getting her to explain the function of a rubber duck. Harry found it very hard not to laugh out loud. Once they had finished their breakfast they headed back up the stairs towards the room. Harry did try to get them to use the elevator but Mrs Weasley put her foot down.

"I do not trust that thing. If it isn't done by magic then how is it done then?" Mrs Weasley said before dragging a protesting Ginny to the stairs.

"But Harry got to go on it mum." Ginny whined. "He was completely safe."

"I said no Ginny." Mrs Weasley scolded before dragging Ginny up the stairs. "Stop moaning or you won't be able to open your presents."

Once they got back into the room Ginny ran over the tree and picked up Harry's present to her and sat down ready to open it up. She sat

patiently as her parents sat comfortably on one of the sofas and Harry sat in the other sofa closest to Ginny. Ginny was rocking backward and forward in anticipation of opening her present.

"Go on then Ginny, hand out the presents or are you just going to sit there and do nothing." Mrs Weasley said once she settled down. Ginny instantly started looking for presents for everyone. Ginny grabbed one and handed it over to Harry.

"It's from me." Ginny said blushing. "I hope you like it."

Harry unwrapped the present to reveal a photo in a frame of all the Weasleys standing in front of the Burrow. Scribed in the top frame was... "The Burrow, Your Home away from Home."

Harry smiled so much after reading that. He scooted over to Ginny who was waiting to see if he liked it. He bent close to her before saying, "I love it." And then he pecked her on the cheek. "Thank you."

This caused Ginny to blush deep red before whispering "You're welcome Harry." Ginny then turned to her present and opened it up. Inside was also a photo inside a frame. The photo was a picture of Harry, Ron, Neville and Hermione with Hogwarts in the background.

"You always moaned over the summer that you wanted to come to Hogwarts. I wish I could take you there but I could get expelled if I do. This, however, is the next best thing. Just to keep you tied over until you get the real thing. The bushy hair girl you see is Hermione. Whist the tall stupid thing with red hair is your brother..." this caused Ginny to laugh out loud. "... and the other boy is Neville." Harry explained.

Ginny looked up at him smiling wider than even he thought was possible. All of a sudden she had wrapped her arms around his neck hugging the life out of him.

"Ginny if you didn't like it all you should have done was said so. Not try and strangle the life out of me." Harry teased as she let go.

She playfully hit him on the arm before kissing him on the cheek just like he did her. "You really are the best Harry. You really have made this Christmas the best Christmas ever."

"What are best friends for then Ginny, if not making each other happy?" Harry said. Harry saw Ginny sag again after him calling her his best friend. She was getting rather good at hiding it now. Harry didn't want her to hide it though. She still too young, Harry thought over and over again as he sat by her watching her open her presents, watching her glow as she got more and more excited after opening each and every one.

After her presents were open she took them to her room and came back with the traditional Weasley jumper on. Once they made sure they got everything Charlie apparated to the entrance to the reserve. Ginny took Mr Weasley's hand and they did the same.

"I'll take Harry Sirius, you go on ahead." Mrs Weasley said and Sirius apparated from the room. Harry went over to Mrs Weasley to grab hold of her arm. "Sit down Harry I would like to talk to you."

"What's up Mrs Weasley?" Harry said as he sat down on the couch.

"Now what happened to mum?" Mrs Weasley smiled at him causing to Harry to smile back.

"What's up then mum?" Harry said. He had never felt so much motherly love then he did right then. Mrs Weasley last time around insisted on him calling her mum because of his and Ginny's engagement. This time she was letting him call her mum because she really thought him as one of her own son's.

"I want to talk to you about Ginny. Her feelings for you and your feelings for her." Mrs Weasley said. If Harry was expecting anything this was not it.

"What you mean mum?" Harry said nervously.

"Now you might be able to fool Ginny but I know what I see. You might not even know it yourself but after today I am convinced you have some feelings for her." Mrs Weasley said.

'Damn damn damn.' Harry screamed in his head. What was he going to do? "What you mean? Ginny's my best friend so of course I care for her."

"You kissed her Harry. It might not have been on the lips but you did kiss her. Now Ginny won't make a big deal out of it because she's convinced herself that she has no chance being with you. I just want to make sure you're not stringing her along, trying to get her hopes up just to turn her down again." Mrs Weasley said

"I am definitely not doing that Mrs Weasley." Harry said anger in his voice. "I'd never do that to Ginny!"

"Then may I ask what your attentions with my daughter are?" Mrs Weasley said again. "Because it's obvious you have grown some feelings towards her. For those that look anyway. Her brothers and Arthur probably won't notice it. Sirius seems to have though because he was smiling so much after you kissed her on the cheek. I just want my daughter to be happy. And not have her heart broken."

"I'm not just going to ignore her because my best friend has feelings for me Mrs Weasley." Harry explained.

"I'm not asking you to Harry. I want to know what your feelings towards Ginny are exactly and make sure you have her best interests at heart." Mrs Weasley explained again.

Harry sighed and conceded. There was no way around it. "Yes you're right; I think I do have feelings for her." Harry conceded and Mrs Weasley smile grew more. "But she's too young, we're too young you know. I don't think we're old enough to... well date. But if Ginny found out she would want to date now and I'm not sure if that would work or..."

"Harry I understand. I honestly didn't think you put so much thought into it. If I am to guess the way you're talking about it that you actually had feelings towards Ginny before she had feelings towards you. Am I right?" Mrs Weasley asked. And Harry nodded blushing nervously.

"I'm trusting you with my daughter Harry. Don't let her down. And don't wait too long. After all if you wait too long for you two to grow up she might have grown out of her feelings for you and direct them towards another boy. If I'm honest I think you're both too young to have these feelings for one another. But I'm glad if its got to be

someone then it is you. So now that we got that out of the way why don't we go see some dragons?"

"Yeah I'd like that. I'd quite like to see the baby dragons Ginny was on about." Harry said walking towards the door.

"You know we might have another dragon lover on our hands with Ginny." Mrs Weasley said.

"I don't know mum. She might like them now. But I'm telling you she has a temper that can rival your own and quite handy with the spell work even if she hasn't been to Hogwarts yet." Harry said.

"Well what ever she chooses to become I'll support her every step of the way." Mrs Weasley said.

"So will I." Harry said as he stood up and let Mrs Weasley grab hold of his arm that didn't have Simon asleep on. Harry felt the horrid sensation of being squeezed to death for a split second that accompanied apparating and then he found himself outside the reserve where Sirius, Ginny and Mr Weasley were waiting for them.

"What took you so long?" Ginny asked hands on hips. "I want to see the dragons."

"Ginny you really don't know how much you look like your mum when you do that you know?" Harry said.

Ginny stuck her tongue at Harry then grabbed his arm to drag him into the reserve. She suddenly withdrew her hand when she felt something squishy on it. Harry bent down so that only she could hear. "Don't worry it's only Simon."

"But you haven't talked to him at all since you got here." She whispered back.

"You said you didn't like me talking Parseltongue." Harry replied.

"I didn't say that. I just said that I wasn't used to it." Ginny replied "I wouldn't think the fact that you can talk to snakes makes you evil. "

"Well only you and Sirius know about Simon and the fact that I can speak Parseltongue and I would like to keep it like that." Harry said.



"I know Harry I kept my promise didn't I." Ginny said before the gates of the reserve opened and they went inside.

Ginny dragged Harry to where the baby dragons were straight away and bent down over the railings to pick one up. "Ginny are you sure you're allowed to do that?" Harry asked as she held one close to her chest, stroking its back.

"Well technically no but Charlie lets me. Do you think mum will let me take one home?" Ginny asked.

"My god, you're worse than Hagrid." Harry said.

"Ginny." Came Charlie's voice from behind Harry. "Make sure you don't have them out for too long, they do need there rest. If they get to restless they might get a little sensitive. Mum will kill me if one of them bites you."

"Okay Charlie." Ginny said back. Harry turned around to see Charlie walking around. "Come on Harry, do you want to hold one? This one here is Dixie."

"Dixie... you named her?" Harry asked. Harry never knew she had a thing for dragons. Although he never got to know Ginny until his fifth year. She probably would of grown out of it by then.

"Yeah I named all of them." Ginny said and then she was off explaining what she had called them and why. An hour later the dragon Ginny was holding was starting to stir so Ginny put her back in the cage and they went over to Charlie to start looking around the rest of the reserve.

Ginny shivered a little as they followed Charlie along the path to the dragons. "It's cold isn't it Harry?" she said as she wrapped her arms around her chest and Harry could see her teeth starting to chatter. Harry stopped Ginny from continuing after Charlie.

"Ginny take off the jacket." Harry said as he turned to face her.

"What..." Ginny said shocked. "I said I was cold not hot."

"I know that dimwit now take off the jacket and give it to me." Harry replied "or don't you trust me."

Ginny reluctantly took her jacket off and handed it over to Harry. She wore her red and blue Weasley jumper underneath that with her red hair and made Ginny look cute in Harry's opinion. Harry now holding Ginny's coat took his wand out of his pocket and touched the tip of his wand to the coat muttering "Tepidus sursum." Harry then handed the coat back to Ginny and she put it on immediately looking at Harry in surprise as she felt warmth flowing through her body.

"Better Ginny?" Harry asked as he put an arm around Ginny pulling him close to him. "Not getting cold now are you?"

"Thank you." Ginny said as she snuggled closer to Harry.

"Yeah well we can't let you go suffering from hypothermia out in this cold weather can we?" Harry said as they came up to the first enclosure where a Romanian longhorn was sleeping. "You know, I bet we could have used him to warm you up a bit. Although your mum might have killed me for doing it." Harry said which caused Ginny to laugh silently into his chest.

They walked up to the board to read what it said about the native dragons asleep before them.

### Romanian Longhorn

The longhorn has Dark-green scales and long, glittering golden horns with which it gores its prey before roasting it. When powdered, these horns are highly valued as potion ingredients. The native territory of the longhorn has now become the world's most important dragon reservation, where wizards of all nationalities study a variety of dragons at close range. The longhorn has been the subject of an intensive breeding program because its numbers have fallen so low in recent years, largely because of its horns, which are now defined as a class B Tradable Material

Harry looked at the sleeping figures to see a moving figure way out into the distance in the trees. Harry pointed it out to Ginny before it disappeared from view. After a couple of minutes they moved onto the next enclosure where this time they saw a fully grown Peruvian

viper tooth. Yet again Harry and Ginny went over to the sign to read it.

### Peruvian Vipertooth

This is the smallest of all known dragons, and the swiftest in flight. A mere fifteen feet or so in length, the Peruvian Vipertooth is smooth scaled and copper-coloured with black ridge markings. The horns are short and the fangs are particularly venomous. The Vipertooth will feed readily on goats and cows, but has such a liking for humans that the international confederation of wizards was forced to send exterminators in the late nineteenth century to reduce the vipertooth numbers. The vipertooths are now an endangered dragon and most likely will be extinct within the next hundred years

The vipertooth was surrounded by an electric cage so that the dragons couldn't get out and attack the people working at the reserve.

"Come on guys we got to leave the vipertooths." Charlie said

"Why?" Ginny asked as she and Harry made their way back along the path they just came from.

"Feeding time my dear sister." Charlie said.

"Yeah" Harry agreed. "Guess we know what happens to those employees who get on the wrong side of the employers. I bet the vipertooths never go hungry."

"No they wouldn't. I mean Charlie's my brother they wouldn't..." Ginny said as she stopped dead in her tracks a fearful look on her face as she looked between Harry and Charlie.

"Harry is just teasing you Ginny. It was just a joke. We don't feed them humans." Charlie explained.

"Ginny you really thought I meant that?" Harry asked her shocked that she had taken it so serious. "It was just a joke. They don't feed them humans. They are not going to feed Charlie to the dragons. I promise." Ginny just nodded before letting go of Harry and went over to give Charlie a hug.

Come five o'clock they were dressed smartly and making their way down to dinner. Unfortunately Harry and Sirius didn't know this so they wore the clothes that they came in however Ginny wore a blue satin dress that made her eyes, in Harry's view, sparkle magically. Harry smiled at Ginny and she returned the smile, mistaking it for a friendly smile when really it was a loving smile. She was so beautiful, even at ten, Harry thought as they sat down at the table they booked that morning.

Dinner consisted of the usual Christmas stuff. Turkey, lamb, vegetables and sausages wrapped in bacon. Harry spent almost two hours constantly eating, the events of the day making him hungry. They laughed and told jokes, a normal Weasley Christmas Harry thought as come nine thirty they finally left the table. Ginny was getting rather sleepy now and she had rested her head on Harry's shoulders as he helped her up to the room.

"So you had a fun day Gin?" Harry asked as they headed to the corridor in which the room was on.

"The best Harry." Ginny said sleepily into his shoulder. "You really are the best aren't you?"

"I ain't the best Ginny. But thank you for the compliment." Harry said wiping a strand of hair away from Ginny's face that had fallen in front of her eyes and pushed it back behind her ear causing Ginny to blush slightly.

Once in the room. Harry looked down at her smiling and she just smiled back. "Thank you Harry." Ginny said "You really have made this the best Christmas ever. I'll never forget it."

"Same her Gin." Harry said as he gave her one last hug before Mrs Weasley pulled Ginny away from Harry and led her into her room.

"You really won't know how much this meant for Ginny Harry." Charlie said as Sirius was packing up their stuff.

Harry looked at the door that led to Ginny's room and smiled before saying. "Oh I think I might have some idea."

Five minutes later found Sirius and Harry outside the dragon reserve, again meeting with Craig from the Romanian ministry.

"Hi there. Did you find Charlie and his family okay? Had a nice Christmas?" Craig said in greeting.

"Wonderful Christmas and yes, thank you for the directions. Sirius replied. "Now, do you have our return portkey for us?"

"Ten o'clock to England." Craig said before handing them an old sock. "Hope to see you again some time."

Harry waited a further five minutes before the rushing sound of the portkey had them travelling back to England. Sirius said thank you to the ministry official in England who met them and took the used portkey before apparating Harry back to Potter Manor.

"Right it's been a very long day and I'm off to bed." Sirius said.

"It's eight o'clock." Harry exclaimed.

"Yes and I was up at three so excuse me whilst I catch up on my beauty sleep." Sirius said as he headed out of the kitchen door. "You can make your own way back to Hogwarts yes?"

"You could sleep for twelve hours and you still look like you do now, sleep won't manage to help you much." Harry called after him. Sirius just grunted and made his way up the stairs.

"So Simon enjoyed the day?" Harry asked Simon who was still wrapped around his arm.

"Cold but it was nice to get out of Hogwarts. Thanks for taking me with you." Simon replied.

"Estelle" Harry called out and in a burst of flames she was perched on his shoulder.

"Have fun?" she asked.

"Ginny gets more beautiful by the day." Harry replied.

"Yes of course and you're not biased at all are you." Estelle said and then in a burst of flames Harry was returned to Hogwarts.

"How were things here?" Harry asked Estelle.

"I wouldn't know, I spent all day in your room at Potter Manor. Godric was going on about how you don't take no for an answer when it comes to Ginny?" Estelle replied.

"Meaning?" Harry asked confused.

"You do know the ministry originally turned down Sirius's request for two portkeys today." Estelle told him.

"No. how come we got them then" Harry asked wandering what Sirius had to do in order to get them.

"He offered to pay double the price they usually are." Estelle said.

"But they're five hundred galleons a portkey. That would have made today cost two thousand. That's a rip off!" Harry exclaimed. 'But I suppose.' Harry said as an afterthought "when it comes to Ginny she's worth a whole a lot more.'

"Now where have you been today Mr Potter? Professor Dumbledore told your friends you were out with your godfather. Anywhere special?" The fat lady asked as he came to the portrait hole.

"Nah just hung around at home. Sirius was getting lonely without company. He wanted me home for Christmas Day so Dumbledore let me use his floo connection to floo home."

"Very well." she said as she swung open to let Harry in. Harry walked in to see Ron and Neville around the fire talking. Their backs were to the portrait hole so they didn't see him come in.

"When do you think Harry is getting back?" he heard Neville say.

"Well if it's today it's got to be soon. It's eight already." Ron said looking at his watch.

"Yeah, he hasn't even opened up his presents yet." Neville said.

Now, Harry thought would be the best time to say he was back. "So guys have fun without me?"

"Harry!" they said before rushing over to him.

"Where you been mate?" Ron asked.

"I thought I said in my letter that I went to spend the day with Sirius." Harry said. Well this was a half truth; Sirius was with him most of the day.

"But you haven't opened up any of your presents yet." Ron said.

"No I haven't, that's why I'm going to go do that now." Harry replied walking towards the stairs that led up to the boys' dormitories. Once in his dorm he jumped onto his bed and grabbed the nearest present to him and opened it. Out fell the usual Weasley jumper from Mrs Weasley. It was emerald green just like his eyes. Harry suddenly realised Ginny's present was in his coat pocket and took it out and put it on his bedside table.

"When did you get that?" Ron asked as he looked at the picture of the Burrow and his brothers, sister, and parents.

"I took it with me this morning to open at home. Ginny's was the first one I came across." Ron and Neville took in the lie.

"So if you only opened one present today what did you and Sirius do all day?" Neville asked.

"Played games mostly. Exploding Snap, a little bit of chess, Which I must say I thrashed Sirius at. Had a big Christmas dinner. Your mum's is so much better than Sirius's Ron." Harry said lying again which caused Ron to laugh.

Harry took a random present from the foot of his bed and out flopped Hagrid's flute for him. Harry forgot that he received this, it would be useful for when it came to getting Fluffy to fall asleep. Next came Hermione's present and a box of chocolate frogs and a book on how to perform simple spells. Hermione was still obviously worried by the lack of magic that Harry had shown.

Ron's present was a picture of the current Chudley Canons squad. "You know we're getting better now every season. And we got a new beater and chaser. They're pretty good. I say we've got a chance at

the playoffs. We won't win the league but the playoffs... we might scrape in.

Fred and George's present to him was a box of tricks from Zonko's joke shop. He definitely won't tell Mrs Weasley that he got these. Peeves would be very happy to use them.

Percy's was a book on how to become the best prefect there was. He obviously was trying to stop Harry taking after his brothers. He threw that book into his trunk where it lay forgotten within five minutes.

Neville's present was a book on Herbology. "I know I'm not very good at most stuff like Hermione but I know a hell of a lot on Herbology. If you wish we can be partners from now on and I'll help you understand it all. Hermione would be pleased if you were getting good at a subject, even if it is Herbology. Although you know some stuff in potions. Just stupid Snape hating your guts stopping you from getting good marks there."

"Thanks Neville. It really means a lot." Harry said in awe. Neville was becoming more and more confident now he was hanging around himself, Ron, and Hermione. This pleased Harry to no end. Although it would mean his friend would be slightly different. But come to think of it. When the DA was going on Neville was the quickest person to pick up on the spells bar Hermione. Maybe he was just becoming the person he would have been last time around quicker.

Harry all of a sudden felt a yawn coming along and he tried to stifle it with no such luck.

"God I'm tired. Mind if I go to bed guys?" Harry asked as he felt another yawn coming on.

"Nah Harry, goodnight and see you in the morning." Ron said as he and Neville left the room. Harry got changed into his PJ's and got into bed. With one last look at the picture of the Burrow Ginny gave him he closed his eyes and fell into a restful sleep.

AN: OMG Such a long chapter nearly thirty pages! And close to ten thousand words! And I got it out earlier then I was expecting. Wow.



Well it was all change for xmas. I hope you liked the conversation between Harry and molly. I wasn't initially going to put that in there but it just came out on the page whilst I was writing I hope its okay. I also hope you liked the harryXGinny moments there's not many cause otherwise Ginny might pick up on it and they're not going to get together till 3rd year. Anyway review review and I'll be of writing the next chappy. C ya BTW it was writherchick13 who came up for Ginny's present to Harry

Disclaimer: I Do Not Own Harry Potter

The rest of the holidays went by with no incident. Hermione came back a day before the lessons were due to restart and was disappointed that no one had found Nicholas Flamel yet. As the nagging of Hermione returned for Harry to do lots of revision and studying to help with his classes the start of spring term also brought back the Quidditch practices.

Wood worked them harder than Harry remembered them working before and kept losing his temper when the twins would mess around. Come one very wet and windy practice Wood gave them the bad news that Harry didn't really want to hear again but knew it was coming anyhow.

"Will you two stop messing around?" Wood called to the twins who were pretending to fall off their brooms. "You know, if you do that in the match we will lose this game. Snape's refereeing this game and I'll be damned if you can give him an excuse to knock points off Gryffindor."

George, who had lost grip on his broom when he heard Wood's words, spat out some mud from his mouth before saying "Snape's refereeing? Since when can Snape referee a quidditch game? He's not going to be fair if we might overtake Slytherin."

"Don't blame me guys." Wood explained "I wasn't the one who chose this. We are just going to have to play a clean game. Don't give Snape an excuse to pick on us."

Once practice was over Harry headed up to the Gryffindor common room to see Ron and Hermione playing a game of chess. Ron just nodded his head before turning back to the game. Harry didn't really think this was important news. Nothing came out of it so he decided to wait for Neville to come up.

Just a moment after Ron managed to checkmate Hermione's queen the portrait door opened and in toppled Neville with the leg locker curse on him. Everyone laughed apart from Harry, Hermione and Ron who rushed over to him to see if he was alright. Hermione hastily removed the curse and Ron and Harry guided him over to where they were sitting.

"What happened Neville?" Ron asked as Neville settled down in the couch.

"Malfoy." Neville said. "He said he was looking for someone to practice it on. He said he would have preferred Harry but I was the next best thing."

"Report him Neville" Hermione said.

"Don't want trouble." Neville mumbled out.

"You've got to stand up to him Neville." Ron said. "He gets his kicks out of walking all over people. But don't stand by and let him do that to you."

"There's no point in telling me I'm not brave enough to be in Gryffindor, Malfoy's done that already." Neville said before moving his head downwards to look at the floor.

"If you weren't brave enough the sorting hat would never have put you here." Harry said taking out a chocolate frog from his pocket and handing it to Neville. "Heck you stood up to Malfoy that day at breakfast remember. Even though we got detention. Which I might add professor McGonagall never told us what time so we didn't actually get detention for it. And now you say you aren't brave. Standing up for your parents that day made you the bravest Gryffindor I know so do not in any circumstances think that you don't belong here. The sorting hat put you here for a reason."

Neville's eyes glistened with tears as Harry finished his speech. "Thanks Harry." He said un-wrapping the chocolate frog. He looked at the card before giving it to Ron. "Dumbledore, that one is so popular nearly everyone's got him. I know you have him but I don't collect them but you and Harry do. You might be able to trade him for one that you don't have."

Ron took the card before smiling at Neville and turned it over to read the back. "Hey I found him!" he exclaimed once he read it. "Listen to this. Professor Dumbledore is particularly famous for his defeat of the dark wizard Grindelwald in 1945, for the discovery of the twelve uses of dragon's blood and his work on alchemy with his partner... NICOLAS FLAMEL"

"Oh my... Stay here you three I'll be right back." Hermione exclaimed before running up the girl's staircase. A couple of seconds later she was rushing back down with a giant book in her hands. "I never thought to look in here. I got it out of the library for light reading."

"That is light?" Ron said but hurriedly shut up after the look Hermione gave him. She went back to flipping through the pages, taking time to carefully look at a page once in a while. Finally she stopped at a page and looked up.

"We allowed to speak yet?" Ron said which caused Hermione to hit him over the head before going make to the page.

"Nicholas Flamel is the only known maker of the philosopher's stone!" she said hurriedly looking at the boys expectantly.

"What's that?" Ron and Neville said together.

"Honestly don't you guys read?" She said looking at the three of them

"Hey" Harry said putting up his hands "I never said I didn't know what it was."

"You actually know something Harry? About magic?" Ron said with a smile across his face acting shocked.

"Shut it. If my knowledge is correct the stone turns any metal into gold. And produces the Elixir of Life that makes the drinker immortal. I just didn't know Flamel made it." Harry explained.

"So the dog must be guarding the stone." Hermione said.

"Agreed." Harry said nodding his head

"If this falls into the wrong hands it could be deadly." Hermione said. "That's properly why Fluffy's guarding it. It used to be in Gringotts remember. Someone tried to steal it from there. Flamel must have asked Albus to guard it 'cause he knew someone was after it."

"And that someone is Snape." Ron said.

"Agreed." Hermione said.

"A stone that makes all metal into gold and produces a drink to stop you from dying. No wonder Snape is after it." Neville said "Anyone would want that."

"Hell yeah, I might try and steal it before Snape if it's that good." Harry joked.

Hermione looked at him crossly as if to say that this is no laughing matter whilst Neville and Ron chuckled behind him.

"No wonder we couldn't find Flamel in recent history books. He isn't exactly recent is he? If he's six hundred and sixty five." Ron said as he was reading the passage in the book about Flamel.

They all sat down in their chairs to digest what they'd just found out when Harry remembered the quidditch game.

"Snape is refereeing the next quidditch game by the way. The thing with Neville and the stone drove it out of my mind but Snape has decided to referee the next match." Harry told them.

"Snape? Referee? You've got to be joking." Ron said.

"Don't play Harry." Hermione said. "You can't afford Snape trying to kill you again."

"Say you're ill mate." Ron suggested.

"Pretend to break your leg." Neville suggested.

"Really break your leg." Ron said looking at him in the eye.

"We don't have a reserve seeker. And I'm not afraid of Snape. I can out fly him any day so it will be hard for him to catch me. I'm going to play. Slytherins will think I'm a coward if I don't. We will win and overtake them in the championship." Harry said "I'm going to play." He said with finality in his voice.

"Just as long as we're not wiping you off the pitch afterwards." Hermione replied.

"Way to install confidence Hermione." Harry said sarcastically. "I might hire you to be my personal confidence booster."

Harry stood on the pitch waiting for Snape to blow the whistle. Harry soon heard the sound he was waiting for and flew up into the air.

Meanwhile in the stands Ron, Hermione and Neville were watching nervously. All of a sudden Ron felt a finger poking him in the back of his head and he whipped around to see Malfoy looking back at him.

"How long do you reckon it will be until Potter loses control of his broom again? Crabbe and Goyle here think ten minutes. I don't think he will last five." Malfoy said. Ron, Neville and Hermione ignored him as they watched Harry narrowly missed by a bludger. "You know I finally worked out how Gryffindor chooses their team players. It's all those people they feel sorry for you see. Weasleys with no money. Potter with no family apart from a convicted murderer. He must stay awake all night shaking with fear that Black might sneak into his room and kill him."

"SHUT THE HELL UP MALFOY" Ron hissed out under his breath as he saw Harry go into a dive.

"Oh look, Potter's found some gold on the ground for you. Do be kind and thank him when he gives the knut to you. Your mum might be able to buy some bread now so your ickle sister can stop starving herself." Malfoy sneered. "Although a girl like Weasley shouldn't really be alive. It's not like there's any point to her living. It's not like your family can buy her presents or what not at Christmas." Malfoy said with a smirk on his face. "What's the point in living when you can't even get Christmas presents."

All of a sudden Ron had to duck when he saw Harry flying straight at him. Harry stopped just where Ron's head was again. Grabbed the greasy hair and pulled down hard causing Malfoy to hit his nose on the back seat of Ron's chair breaking it clean and causing blood to run down the Slytherin's face.

"If I ever hear you talking about Ginny like that again I swear you will wish death to come to you quick compared to what I would do to you." Harry hissed out, more angry than Ron had ever seen him before.

Snape blew his whistle and awarded a penalty to Slytherin because of Harry's outburst and Harry flew back into the air looking for the snitch. Even before the Slytherin chaser could get the Quaffle to take the penalty Harry had gone into a dive causing everyone to stop and watch.

Harry raced down to the ground and felt the fluttering of wings flap against his hand as he caught the snitch and setting a new Hogwarts record for the fastest ever catch.

About an hour after the game had finished Harry finally left the changing rooms happier than he could have hoped for. Images of Ron, Neville's and Hermione celebration down on the pitch running through his mind. If he didn't know any better people would think they actually won the Quidditch Cup this year already. He got points taken off for his attack on Malfoy but he believed it to be worth it after what he heard him say about Ginny.

Thinking this caused Harry to think about what she was doing now. He hadn't written a letter since the Christmas holidays. He thought he really should do it soon, otherwise Ginny may think back to earlier times where she thought he would forget her. Harry rounded the corner to see Snape and Quirrell having a conversation as he hid in the bushes, hearing the last couple of sentences of the conversation.

"You don't want me as your enemy, Quirrell." Snape said.

"I-I-I d-don't know w-w-what you mean..." Quirrell stammered.

"Of course you know what I mean. Have you found out how to get past the other security features and that three headed dog of Hagrid's. Hagrid isn't an easy person to talk to when it comes to betraying Dumbledore. You think you're going to get him to talk with some of your little bit of hocus pocus. I'm waiting." Snape said.

"B-but I d-d-don't." Quirrell stammered.

"Very well we'll have another conversation when you've figured out where your loyalty truly lies." Snape said before moving off back towards the castle.

So that was what the entire conversation was last time. And didn't it happen in the forbidden forest last time as well? Harry didn't really seem to care that it changed like that. It's not like it would make a massive change in the timeline that.

Harry managed to get back to the common room within fifteen minutes from there. A new record Harry believed as he came into the common room.

"Harry where have you been!" Hermione said jumping for joy.

Ron then noticed Harry and jumped up screaming "We won we won. We're in the lead for the quidditch cup. It's party time Harry. Fred and George got that lot from the kitchens." Ron said nodding over to the table that was full of food. Neville also joined them whilst Ron was saying his bit.

"That was some flying Harry." Neville said "And what a way to bang up Malfoy."

"No one talks about Ginny like that and gets away with it. Malfoy knows spells alright. But when it comes to muggle fighting he doesn't know how to stop it. Hence why I use my fist rather than wand when he attacks us and I find my self forced to retaliate. But anyway I've got some things to tell you three." Harry said before explaining what happened between Snape and Quirrell. Well what happened to them last time around anyway. If he told them what he heard this time they would have confirmation that it was indeed the stone. However if Harry told them what he heard last time around the whole conversation then they would have perfect proof.

"So it is the philosopher's stone, you were right Hermione." Harry said nodding to her. "Snape asked about Quirrell's hocus pocus. There are probably other things guarding the stone and if Dumbledore asked Quirrell and Snape to guard it then he probably asked other teachers as well. But Snape asked Quirrell especially about the things guarding it. So he probably already knows the others.

"So you're saying the stone is safe as long as Quirrell stands up to Snape?" Hermione asked and Harry nodded.

"It will be gone by next Tuesday then." Ron said



A/N: I know I know sooo crap isn't it really. I really hate this chapter not cause of content its just that its because its only a filler chapter to get the story closer to the end of this year. Norbet next chapter ah man I love that little bugger. Dragons rule! I'm worse than Hagrid :P plz forgive me how crap this chapter is. Sorry :( I'll try and make it up to you in the next one. Also I have managed to hire someone to draw fanart from this fic. Some characters and some scenes which have been done and some scenes that havent been done yet. I will post them on my yahoo group so if ur interested in looking at the fanart for this fic join my yahoo group. They should be up soon maybe.

Disclaimer: I Do Not Own Harry Potter

Harry woke one morning to find Hermione sitting at one of the tables in the common room surrounded by books. Neville and Ron were starring at her like she had turned into a ghost.

"Err guys what's wrong?" Harry asked as he came to stand next to Ron and Neville.

"Oh Harry you're here. Here, this is your revision time table I drew up for you." Hermione said handing him a piece of paper.

"Hermione the exams are ages away." Harry said.

"TEN WEEKS! Harry." Hermione shouted out. "That's not ages, that's like a second to Nicholas Flamel."

"When did we turn six hundred years old, Ron?" Harry asked turning to him.

Ron just shrugged, trying to force back a laugh. "What are you revising for Hermione anyway?" Ron asked her. "You know it all by heart anyway."

"What am I revising for? WHAT am I revising for?" Hermione said looking at Ron like he had gone bonkers. "Are you mad? No don't answer that question. You do realise we need to pass these exams to get into second year? They are one of the most important exams..."

"But all exams are important according to you Hermione." Harry interrupted her but remained silent after receiving a look that could kill. "Shutting up."

"Harry, you really need to follow my example if you want to get into next year." Hermione said "I should have started revising months ago, I don't know what got into me." McGonagall apparently agreed with her since when the Easter holidays came around she piled them up with so much homework, Harry thought he was going to crack. The Easter holidays were spent revising constantly with Hermione, which could be distracting with her going over the twelve uses of dragon's blood over and over again.

One day in the library Ron all of a sudden burst out about how he was never going to get it and fail, looking longingly out of the window at the first clear blue sky they'd had for months. Ron suddenly looked up behind Harry to see Hagrid.

"Hagrid what are you doing in here?" Ron asked causing Neville, Hermione and Harry to look up from their text books. Well Neville and Hermione, Harry was reading 'Quidditch Through the Ages' again. It really was a good read.

Harry looked up to see Hagrid hiding a book behind his back, "Jus' lookin'. What you guys up to?" Hagrid said peering at their books. "Yer not still looking for Nicholas Flamel are yah?"

"Nope." Harry said.

"Good. I'm glad you finally listened to me about that." Hagrid said.

"We found him ages ago." Harry said smiling then going back to his book.

"What?" Hagrid said, now white as snow.

"Yeah and we know that the dog is guarding the Philosopher's Stone..." Ron said aloud.

"SHHH." Hagrid said leaning down close. "Don't talk about that here, we don't know who is overhearing. Come by my hut later, I ain't promising anything mind but don't go talking about it where people can overhear you. They'll think that I told yer or somethin'."

"We'll come by the hut later then." Harry said and Hagrid shuffled off.

"Did anyone notice what he was hiding behind his back?" Hermione asked. Ron, Neville and Harry shook their heads.

"Let me go have a look?" Ron said and he moved of to the section Hagrid was in.

"Do you think its go to do with anything with the stone?" Neville asked.

"Let's wait 'til Ron comes back but it might be." Hermione said just as Ron came back with a couple of books in his arms.

"Dragons." Ron whispered. "He was getting books about dragons, look." He said as he held up "From Egg to inferno, A dragons keeper's guide."

"Hagrid has always wanted a dragon remember. He told us that afternoon when we first met him." Harry said.

"But it's illegal isn't it?" Hermione asked "I swear I read somewhere that it's illegal."

"Yeah it is. It was outlawed by the warlocks convention of 1709. Everyone with a brain knows that." Ron explained.

"And you know it because?" Harry said.

"Very funny Harry but this is no time for joking about. Hagrid could get into some serious trouble if someone found out he's planning on raising a dragon." Ron said.

"But how would he get a dragon egg or a baby dragon to begin with." Neville asked.

"Beats me." Ron said looking at all three of them.

Half an hour later they found themselves outside Hagrid's door waiting for him to open it. Harry saw Hagrid's face peer out of a closed window before letting them in. Harry instantly saw the fire and the dragon's egg but they needed information. Well the other three did. But it would seem weird if Harry already knew it.

"So what is it yer wantin' to ask me?"

"Well..." Harry started. "We were wondering if you could tell us what else is guarding the stone. Apart from Fluffy."

"Of course I can't tell you that." Hagrid said frowning. "It's more than my job's worth to tell you that. And I don't really know anyway. So even if I did want to, which I don't, I wouldn't tell you. It was almost stolen out of Gringotts. You probably worked that one out."

"Ages ago." Harry said.

"Come on Hagrid. You might not want to tell us but you do know. We're not really interested in what is guarding it. We're just interested in who Dumbledore trusted enough to help guard the stone. Apart from you of course." Hermione said trying to persuade Hagrid.

Hagrid puffed out his chest as Hermione's words reached his ears. "Well I don't suppose there's any harm in that. Lets see, he borrowed Fluffy from me, Sprout did something, as well as McGonagall and Flitwick. Quirrell did something as well as Dumbledore himself. He got Sirius Black to do something..."

"WHAT?" Harry shouted. That was not what he was expecting. "Sirius helped guard the stone?"

"Yeah. Hagrid said "Hang on there's one more. Ah yes Snape. Snape helped an' all.

"Snape?" Hermione said with an edge of fear in her voice.

"Yeah. Yer not still on about him are ya. He helped guard the stone, he's not just about to steal it!" Hagrid explained.

"You're the only person that knows how to get past Fluffy right?" Ron asked.

"Yup not a soul knows how. Cept me and Dumbledore" Hagrid said stocking the fire in the grate.

"It's so hot in here, why have you got all the windows closed. Can we open at least one?" Neville asked.

"Can't Neville. Sorry. I need it warm in here." Hagrid said.

Harry looked at the fire and saw a large black egg that contained Norbert. Hagrid saw where Harry was looking.

"Ah that's err.." Hagrid started trying to explain.

"Where did you get that Hagrid." Ron exclaimed kneeling down by the fire. "It must have cost you a fortune."

"Won it." Hagrid said simply. "Played a game of cards with this fella. I think he was glad to get rid of it to be honest."

"So what are you going to do with it once it's hatched?" Hermione asked.

"Well, I've been doing lots of reading." Hagrid stated. "I got this out of the library. Dragon Breeding for pleasure and profit. It's a bit out of date but it's got all the necessary stuff in here. Keep them in the fire 'cause their mother's breathe on them. And once it hatches feed it a bucket of brandy mixed with chicken blood every half an hour. And it also tells you how you can find out what type of egg you got. What I go there is a Norwegian Ridgeback. They're very rare them." Hagrid finished smiling at them like he'd just won a contest.

"Hagrid..." Hermione started. "You live in a wooden house." However Hagrid didn't hear her.

A couple of weeks later found the four of them in the common room around the table closest to the window which had a portrait view of the grounds and the nice peaceful landscape of Scotland that surrounded Hogwarts. Unfortunately none of them could enjoy it because of the piles and piles of homework which they kept receiving from their teachers. Snape's being the worse of the bunch.

"Do any of you remember what it was like to live a peaceful life?" Ron asked as he flipped through a few pages in his text book before going back to his essay for Herbology.

"Peaceful? What's that?" Harry replied as he flipped through 'A beginners guide to transfiguration.'

"I take that as a no." Ron said.

All of a sudden they were interrupted when Hedwig flew into the open window and delivered a note from Hagrid. It only had two words written on it. It's hatching.

Ron and Neville started to pack their things away.

"Where do you think you're going?" Hermione asked looking up from her book.

Ron and Neville looked at her if she was bonkers. "Hagrid's of course."

"And since when did you guys think Hermione would let any of us skip a lesson?" Harry asked putting his book away.

"Hermione how many times are we going to see a dragon hatching?" Ron said.

"We've got lessons and we would get into trouble if we skip them. And that's nothing to what Hagrid..." Hermione said but was interrupted but Harry.

"Shut up now." Harry hissed at her. Hermione looked at him hurt but Harry nodded over her shoulder and she saw Malfoy trying to listen in. 'Great,' Harry thought 'now we need to worry about Malfoy as well as Hagrid. Just like last time. Am I not allowed to have at least a peaceful life for once?'

Ron and Hermione continued arguing all the way along the corridors and out into the grounds.

"Will you two please shut up." Harry moaned.

"Yeah you're giving us two a headache." Neville agreed as they reached the greenhouse.

"How about we go see him after Herbology during break? Will that be okay with you Hermione?" Harry asked.

"Well I suppose..." Hermione said unsure.

"Great all settled now stop arguing. You two sound like a married couple." Harry said.

This caused both of them to grow pale and take a step away from each other whilst Neville burst out in fits of laughter.

Once the bell rang to sound the end of one of the most boring classes Harry ever had the four of them trudged their way to Hagrid's hut. Harry opened the door and saw his face was looking red with excitement.

"Yer jus' in time. It's nearly out." Hagrid said as he closed the door behind them. The egg was lying on the table with a little hole in the top where it obviously had already cracked through. They could here clicking noises and scrapes as they all got seats around the table. Just as Hermione sat down in her chair there was a crack and the egg split open. And out fell Norbert. Harry would recognise the skinny body and long snout with wide nostrils and the orange eyes from anywhere.

Hagrid reached out a hand trying to stroke Norbert when Norbert snapped at his fingers. "Ah bless him look he knows his mummy." At that time Norbert coughed a little causing Hagrid's beard to catch fire ever so slightly. After patting the fire out he picked the baby dragon up.

"How fast do Norwegian ridgebacks grow exactly?" Hermione asked.

"Err about..." Hagrid started before stopping and turning ghostly white. "Who's that?" he said and Harry turned around to see Malfoy looking threw the window.

Malfoy saw them starring at him and bolted. Harry ran and opened up the door but he was too late, Malfoy was already halfway to the castle. Harry wouldn't be able to catch him. Not without seriously blowing some of his cover anyway.

During the following week the looks Malfoy gave the four of them got Neville, Ron and Hermione nervous.

"Harry what's wrong with you. Malfoy could go to McGonagall or Snape any second." Hermione said when she noticed he wasn't as nervous as the rest of them.

"If he was going to tell on us he would have done so already. He wouldn't want us to get the chance of getting rid of him. He just wants to play with us. What we need to do is get rid of the dragon and fast." Harry explained.

As evening came once again found the four of them in Hagrid's hut pleading with him to let Norbert go.



"I can't let him go. He's too young, he'll die on his own." Hagrid had said when Neville suggested letting him go free. "Oh and his name is Norbert. He really knows me now watch. Norbert, where's mummy?"

Norbert at that time sneezed and Hagrid had to duck to avoid his head being surrounded by fire.

"Soon Norbert will be bigger than your house. Then where will you keep him? You'll find it hard to hide him then." Ron said.

"I –I know I can't keep him forever. But I can't jus' dump him and not know he'll be okay. I can't do that to him. I can't." Hagrid sighed.

Harry smiled and looked over to Ron. "What you think Ron? Might want to send Charlie a little present?"

"What does Charlie got to do with this?" Ron asked perplexed.

Harry just shook his head. "Charlie. Your brother. Studying dragons in Romania. Send Norbert to Charlie. Charlie take care of Norbert.

Harry saw recognition cross Ron's face before it turned into a smile. "That's an excellent idea Harry. How about it Hagrid?" Ron said.

After a further half an hour to persuade him Hagrid reluctantly agreed.

On a late Wednesday night Harry, Hermione and Neville were once again studying for the end of year exams when the portrait hole opened up and then closed again on its own. Then Ron appeared out of nowhere and showed them his hand which had a very bloody handkerchief around it.

"It bit me." Ron said "The bloody thing bit me. And you guess what the great oaf did after it bit ME. He told ME off for frightening it. The way Hagrid goes on about it you'd think it was a white fluffy bunny rabbit."

"I hear bunny rabbits have a bad bite as well if you get your fingers caught in their mouths." Harry said which received some strange looks. "What I'm just saying..."

There was a tap on the window which allowed Harry to cover up the awkward moment after his comment. "Hedwig." Harry greeted her as he opened the window to let her in. Neville took the letter off Hedwig and laid it open on the table so all of them could read it.

Dear Ron and Harry.

How are you? Thanks for the letter, I'd be glad to take the Norwegian Ridgeback, but it won't be easy getting him over here. I think the best thing will be to send him with some friends of mine overnight who are coming to visit me next week. Trouble is, they mustn't be seen carrying an illegal dragon. Could you get the ridgeback up the tallest tower at midnight on Saturday? They can meet you there and take him away while it is still dark. Send me a reply as soon as possible.

Love

Charlie

P.S By the way Harry. Ginny loved your visit over Christmas. I saw how you two acted around each other that day. Is there anything going on that I need to know about?

"Harry, what's he talking about?" Ron asked. "When did you see Ginny over Christmas? And what is he talking about something going on that he needs to know about. What's going on between you and my sister?"

"Nothing going on Ron." Harry explained. "Me and Sirius went to Romania on Christmas day. That's all."

"You lied to us?" Hermione said.

"No I didn't lie exactly... I just didn't tell the whole truth..." Harry said.

"Why didn't you want to tell us you visited Ginny over Christmas?" Hermione asked.

"Because whenever I bring up Ginny you always talk about me and Ginny as if there IS something going on and it's rather annoying. You might as well know now as well that me and Ginny send constant letters to each other. Have been ever since the start of

term." Harry explained "Its no secret that Ginny has feelings for me. I don't particularly care about that. She's my best friend and I'm not just going to ignore her 'cause of something she can't control. But it got rather annoying with you bombarding me with questions about my feelings for Ginny every time I brought her up."

"Oh..." Hermione said. "Sorry Harry, I didn't mean it like that."

"Great, so no more questions about her then?" Harry asked her.

"No Harry I'll leave it." Hermione said "for now." Unfortunately Harry didn't hear the last part.

"Okay so back to Norbert." Neville said "How are we going to get up to the tower at midnight."

"I've got my invisibility cloak. And we've got the Marauders map." Harry said.

"Are we sure about this?" Hermione said.

"Anything to get rid of that bloody dragon." Ron replied.

When Harry awoke the next day as Harry expected Ron's hand had gotten even worse. "Go to the hospital wing. To Madam Pomfrey" Harry told him.

"But what if she asks what bit me?" Ron said.

"She never does. It's in the Healer's Code. It don't matter to them how it happened as long as they heal you. So go." Harry explained.

"How do you know about the healer code?" Ron asked.

"Does it matter just go?" Harry told him and Ron slowly walked off towards the hospital wing.

At the end of the day Harry, Hermione and Neville walked into the hospital wing to find Ron in bed and not looking very well.

"It's not just my hand anymore." Ron whispered "My whole body hurts all over. Malfoy came in to see me. Threatened to tell Madam Pomfrey what happened. But you were right Harry, she didn't ask

what bit me. How did you know that?" Ron asked. "Anyway, Malfoy just kept on saying how we're all going to get expelled for this."

"Don't worry Ron." Hermione said. "It will all be over on Saturday." This caused Ron to sit bolt up right.

"Saturday... oh no." Ron said who had now just gone ghostly white. "I've just remembered. Charlie's letter. It was in the book Malfoy took. He's going to know we're getting rid of Norbert."

At that time Madam Pomfrey ushered Neville, Harry, and Hermione out of the wing.

"Right guys we need to keep to the plan." Harry said as they walked over to Hagrid's after visiting Ron.

"But Malfoy knows we're getting rid of it." Neville said.

"Yes but we've got the Marauders map and invisibility cloak which Malfoy doesn't know about. Plus we don't have time to send another owl to Charlie to tell him to set up another date. Malfoy hasn't told on us yet so I doubt he'll tell on us now."

Hermione and Neville agreed.

When they knocked on Hagrid's door he only opened it up just enough to get his head around.

"I'm sorry but I won't let you in now. Norbert's at a tricky stage, nothing I can't handle though." Hagrid said then his face filled with pain. "Little tyke. Just playing that's all." He said when he explained that Norbert just bit him. "I mean he only a baby, can't do much harm now can he?"

Harry, Neville and Hermione returned to the castle wondering what a normal life would be like.

At eleven thirty on Saturday found Harry and Hermione going down to Hagrid's, the invisibility cloak covering them up. When they got to the entrance they found Peeves playing tennis against the wall.

"Come on." Hermione moaned quietly. "We're going to be late if he doesn't move soon." She whispered to Harry. Harry silently agreed

and concentrated on the tennis racquet. When the ball came to meet the tennis racquet this time, rather than it hitting the strings and start heading back towards the wall again the tennis ball went straight through the racquet and started bouncing towards the entrance to the dungeons.

Peeves looked at the racket for a couple of seconds before looking around the hall.

"Come on, go fetch it. Go fetch." Harry whispered to himself.

"Go fetch..." Peeves crackled. "I ain't no dog you know. So there's students out of bed is there. Planning on going into the grounds are you?" Peeves continued. "What is the price to keep this little expedition a secret?"

Harry had enough and pulled down the cloak so Peeves could see both him and Hermione. "I don't get extremely mad at you, Peeves." Harry said.

"Harry. Oh err..." Peeves stuttered.

"Get out of the way and make sure Filch stays away from the astronomy tower." Harry said. Peeves just simply looked from Harry to Hermione who had a look of shock on her face. "Now Peeves." Harry hissed out under his breath. Peeves just nodded then zoomed up the stairs, dropping the racquet onto the floor, causing a loud crash.

"Yes Peeves, make all the noise in the world." he muttered to himself as Peeves turned the corner, leaving Harry and a shocked Hermione.

"Harry what just happened?" Hermione asked him. "How come Peeves did what you said? Peeve doesn't listen to anyone."

"I kind of have some dirt on him which would get him in lots of trouble if anyone finds out." Harry lied, but fortunately Hermione took it in.

Five minutes later they arrived at Hagrid's hut ready to take Norbert up to the tower. Norbert was in a crate which the invisibility cloak just covered.

"He's got lots of rats and some brandy for the journey." Hagrid said between sobs. "And I packed his teddy bear in with him cause he might get lonely going to Romania." All of a sudden they heard the teddy bear being ripped in two.

"Bye-bye Norbert. Mummy will never forget you." Hagrid sobbed out. Slowly but surely Harry and Hermione dragged the crate through the grounds up the stairs and towards the tower.

Just as they reached the tower Harry heard movement ahead of him so he dragged Hermione and Norbert behind a pillar so no one would walk into them.

"Detention!" They heard Professor McGonagall say. "And twenty points from Slytherin. Wandering around in the middle of the night. What makes you think you have the right..." then Professor McGonagall and Malfoy came around the corner, McGonagall dragging Malfoy by the ear.

"But Professor, Harry Potter is coming and he's got a dragon." Malfoy complained.

"What utter nonsense..." McGonagall replied "A dragon indeed. I will be speaking to Professor Snape about you."

After they had disappeared around the corner Harry and Hermione dragged the crate up the stairs and onto the top of the tower where Harry threw the invisibility cloak off them.

Hermione danced about happier than Harry had seen her all year. "Malfoy's got detention, I could sing."

"Please don't. But I do wish I had a camera so I could show Ron and Neville what you look like whilst dancing... if you would call it that." Harry replied. This comment was rewarded with a small gentle smack around the head.

Twenty minutes later they saw in the distance Charlie's friends flying towards them. Once they had landed they showed them how the harness worked and then rigged Norbert up. They were only there for five minutes before they were flying away.

Hermione walked towards the door to go down the stair before Harry grabbed her and held her back. "Invisibility cloak Hermione." Harry told her before throwing it over her and him. They took a step forward to go down the stairs when Peeves rushed up to meet them. Harry and Hermione stopped dead in their tracks.

"Harry sir. Peeves has come to warn you not to go back down just yet. Filch is waiting at the bottom." He said looking around for them.

"I'm in my invisibility cloak Peeves. But thank you for the warning." Harry whispered. "Tell us when he's gone?"

"I'll do one better than that." Peeves said before rushing down the stairs. Hermione and Harry just stood there waiting to see what would happen when they heard Peeves scream "GOT YOUR CONK!"

Then they heard Filch shout "PEEVES I'LL GET YOU FOR THIS! YOU'LL BE CHUCKED OUT OF HERE." Before they heard footsteps walk away from the bottom of the stairs.

Harry and Hermione waited for five minutes before going back down the stairs and headed back towards the common room. When they got there Neville was waiting for them. Hermione soon explained what happened.

"So what is this dirt you've got on Peeves that will make him do anything you want? Hermione asked him.

"Cant tell you." Harry said.

"Another secret Harry?" Hermione said "How many do you have?"

"It's not that. Its just that I promised Peeves I wouldn't tell anyone! As long as he does little stuff for me." Harry explained.

"Well I got to say it's extremely useful." Neville said.

"Yeah..." Hermione said under her breath so no one could hear her. She looked over to Harry who was making his way up to his bed. "Extremely useful..."

A/N: hey guys next chapter for you. Hope you liked it. Regarding the fanart I talked about in my AN for last chapter. it is in the pipeline. Just the artist I've hired to do it is in a slump right now. Not to worry as he will get it done. I just no sure when :). Hope you guys liked this one and next chapter should be on the way to you soon.



Disclaimer: I Do Not Own Harry Potter

The next morning when Harry woke up he noticed it teeming down with rain. 'So not good for quidditch practice.' he thought as he went to get washed and dressed. After the shower, which Harry thought was rather pointless because he would just get wet and muddy again once he got onto the pitch, he went down to breakfast to find the rest of the quidditch team already there.

"No chance quidditch practice is actually cancelled is there?" Harry asked them sleepily as he helped himself to some bacon and sausages.

"Have you met our captain? Wood, Quidditch fanatic." George replied not opening his eyes. "Since when would you think a thunderstorm would stop practice?"

"I don't but I can dream can't I?" Harry said.

"Yes you can." Came Wood's voice. "But only while you're sleeping. We're in with the best chance of winning the cup for Gryffindor in years. We win our last match and the cup is ours. So no slacking off. A little bit of rain never hurt anybody."

"You call that little?" Harry replied.

"Ah good you're being sarcastic." Wood said. "It means you're fully awake."

"Don't count on it." Harry mumbled so only him and the twins who he was sitting next to could hear. Once they finished, they headed down to the quidditch pitch and entered the Gryffindor changing rooms to get into their gear.

"Right then lads." Wood said.

"And ladies." Katie corrected him. "You always forget to add that part."

"Of course and ladies." Wood said. "I know its not very nice outside."

"That would be an understatement." Harry muttered.

"But this could be the sort of weather we could be playing in so it's good to practice in it." Wood continued.

"Sort of weather, it's the middle of June the match. Ages away." Harry complained. "I bet any money that its clear blue skies come final day."

"Be that at it may. Training in rain wouldn't do us any harm." Wood said. "Now then here's what I want us to practice..."

Wood spent the next two hours going over plays and plays that Harry rarely understood. He didn't need to really. All he had to do was catch the snitch and they would win the cup.

Then, when they finally managed to get out on the pitch not only did they have the rain to deal with but a massive gale force wind had picked up. It was safe to say Harry would rather be in the great hall eating some more breakfast. Harry grabbed hold of his broomstick and kicked off in the air, swerving slightly to the right as the wind blew even stronger.

It was altogether rather a dubious practise. Harry couldn't tell what the rest were doing but in this weather it would take him ages to see the snitch. Finally after a further three hours Wood called time and they trudged back into the changing room.

"Well that went great." Wood said as he addressed the team. "I suspect that cup to be ours easily if we keep this up."

The team just groaned and headed to the showers. Harry didn't bother because he knew he would just get wet and dirty walking back up the castle unless... Harry's thought train interrupted as he thought a rather useful idea of not getting wet whilst going back up to the castle. Harry was careful not to get ready as quick as the others and soon found himself all alone as Fred and George left the changing rooms. Getting washed and dressed at normal speed now he got ready and making sure that no one was around called Estelle.

"You know I count this as cheating Harry." she greeted him.

"What have I got you for, but not use the perks of your flame travel." Harry replied.

"Touché." Estelle said before turning around so Harry could grab hold of her tail feathers and she flamed them to hers and Simon's secret room.

"Harry, what do we owe this great pleasure of seeing you?" Simon greeted him.

"I couldn't be bothered to walk back up to the castle in this weather." Harry replied.

"And here I thought you missed us." Simon said.

"What you up too?" Harry asked Simon. "I mean do you just stay in here all day?"

"I don't know what she does, but time to time she flames out and then couple of hours later flames back." Simon said. "Me, I slither around listening to gossip, search the castle for hiding areas. Make sure I know this castle back to front. Which I can say I do now. Did you know there's a massive chamber beneath us? It's got a giant statue of a bearded man. His mouth looks like an entrance to something."

"The Chamber of Secrets..." Harry said more to himself than to Simon.

"You know of the place?" Simon asked. Harry didn't answer. He was thinking of last time around and what had happened to Ginny. He was rather in a dilemma about that. On one hand, he could not let her do the chamber and everything would be normal next year and Harry didn't have to worry about anything. Plus Ginny wouldn't have to go through all that. On the other hand, he wanted to Ginny to love him. And him saving her from the chamber is what made her fall in love with him in the first place. Harry didn't want Ginny to be in a loveless marriage. He couldn't bear to think what would happen if she didn't fall in love with him.

"Yeah I know of the place." Harry finally said. "Anyway Estelle, what do you do when you flame out from time to time?"

"Ginny might be happy when she gets letters from you but she still gets lonely with only her mum and dad there all year round. That's one of the reasons why she so enjoyed your visit at Christmas. I

often flame to her just to keep her company." Estelle explained. "She rather enjoys my visits. Plus I get my feathers groomed so I'm happy to do it."

"You visit Ginny?" Harry said to her inside his head. "Why did you never tell me this before?"

"Cause Ginny didn't want you to know. She was afraid you might make me stop visiting her." Estelle said.

"Now that's just stupid, go get me a quill and parchment." Harry said to Estelle. Estelle flamed out and not a couple of seconds later was back with a quill and parchment. Harry grabbed the quill and starting righting a hurried letter to Ginny.

Ginny,

Estelle just told me about your little arrangement of when she sometimes comes to see you. Why did you think you needed to keep this from me? I have no problem with this If you're getting lonely then I'm all for it. I just wish sometimes I could come with her and visit you but I would get into a hell of a lot of trouble if I leave Hogwarts school grounds.

I've told Estelle under no circumstances is she ever to stop coming to see you if you get lonely. No matter what you say. She disappears for hours at a time so you obviously enjoy her company. Why on Earth you would think I'll ask her to stop visiting you I will never know. Enjoy her company as much as you want.

Harry.

"Take this to Ginny Estelle." Harry told her and she flamed away.

"So what does she do?" Simon said.

"I'm sorry, I forgot that you don't understand her. She visits Ginny to keep her from getting lonely." Harry told him.

"Oh..." Simon said. "That's okay then."

Not five minutes later did Estelle return with letter from Ginny. As soon as Harry took the letter from her she flamed back out again. Wandering where she went off to he read Ginny's reply.

Harry.

How did you know she comes to see me? I never told you and I'm sure neither my parents nor Sirius know she comes to see me. Then of course I re read your first line and it said she told you... how did she tell you? You can understand her? How? I don't understand how you can communicate with her.

Anyway, I thank you for telling her that she can come to me when ever she feels like it. Truthfully I do feel lonely and look forward to every time Hedwig comes with one of your letters. However this way is obviously quicker... why don't you just use Estelle all the time? Although then Hedwig would get jealous I suppose. I told her if it was okay with you to come straight back. Hope you don't mind. You did say I can have her for company when I'm lonely right?

Anyway, thank you for the letter. It was a shame I couldn't see you over the Easter holidays. I guess Hogwarts is so much exciting right? And I'm not trying to guilt trip you in not coming to see me. Honestly I weren't expecting it. Anyway thank you for the letter and saying I can see Estelle a bit. I think she likes me. I'm glad as I like her too.

Talk to you later Harry

Ginny

'I guess I know where Estelle went now.' Harry thought chuckling as he headed out of the door. He grabbed the quill and remaining parchment and took off to the Gryffindor tower. Once inside he sat and wrote some answers to her questions.

Ginny

Phoenixes have very rare and some unknown powers. One of their powers is be able to communicate to the ones they are bonded too. Therefore I and Estelle can talk to each other. I can understand her song and even communicate with her through my mind. This

however is only when I want to. She can be quite the chatterbox when I let her get chatting.

Regarding why I don't use Estelle all the time. Mostly because you are right, Hedwig would get jealous. And then what's the point of having Hedwig. Plus no one is meant to know I own a phoenix. Which means she would have to wait until I'm on my own to deliver the message. Luckily today I was. But mostly I'm not.

Have Estelle with you as much as you want but be careful. Remember I want to keep her a secret. Only you and Sirius know about her and I would very much like to keep it that way for a while. The same with Simon. Hope you are okay and I'll see you soon. Not long now before school ends. Don't get too lonely.

Harry.

Harry finished off his letter and once he got changed out of his dirty clothes he walked to the Owlery to find Hedwig.

"Hey girl, will you take this to Ginny?" Harry asked her. Hedwig affectionately nipped his ear like always before heading off with the letter. Harry decided to go back down to the great hall. If he was lucky he would catch the last of the breakfast. When he got down there he noticed Ron, Hermione and Neville there.

"Hey Guys." Harry said as he helped himself to some cereals.

"How was practice?" Ron asked.

"In this weather?" Harry said "Pointless. But don't tell Wood I said that."

"So what are we doing today?" Harry asked.

"Do you need to ask that question?" Hermione replied. "Revising of course."

"Always revision." Neville muttered only loud enough for Harry to hear him. Harry looked at him and he just shrugged.

"Ah, Mr Potter, Mr Longbottom." Harry looked behind him to see Professor McGonagall. "Can you come by my office once you're finished? We have some matters to discuss."

Harry and Neville looked at each other, both perplexed.

"What was that about?" Hermione asked the two boys.

"How are we meant to know Hermione?" Neville said.

"You two haven't been getting into trouble have you?" Hermione asked again.

"No." Harry said. "Well, no trouble that anyone knows of anyway." He added chuckling.

"Harry, why do you always make things out to be a joke Harry?" Hermione said. "This could be serious."

"Really? I only saw Sirius at Christmas." Harry said knowing that he was annoying Hermione at the moment. "I was hoping to not have to see him until the holidays."

"Arrgh." Hermione said out loud throwing her hands up into the hair. "I can't talk to you when you're in this mood."

"What mood?" Harry asked.

Hermione just shook her head. "Okay, Okay, I'll be serious for a second." Harry said looking at her.

"So you have no clue what this is about?" Hermione asked. "You're sure it's nothing to do with Norbert. Malfoy could have told her last night when McGonagall found him."

"And if McGonagall believed him then she would have come to us last night and dragged us off by the ear then and there." Harry said. "Well not literally by the ear but you get my drift. And plus, why would it be just me and Neville. It was me and you who took Norbert up to the tower. And Neville and Ron knew about it. She would have asked all of us to go to her if it was about him."

"Yeah you're right..." Hermione said. "It's probably about your studies. Maybe offering to help you out to study?"

After breakfast Harry and Neville left the great hall and made their way to McGonagall's office.

"Please sit." She asked them as they came in. "This won't take very long but I need to ask you. Do you remember the first couple of weeks of your year here?"

"Vaguely." Harry said.

"Do you happen to remember the fight you two got in with Mr Malfoy?" McGonagall asked them.

"Yeah the one where Malfoy insulted Neville's parents professor." Harry said suddenly remembering. "You gave us detention for it..."

"Did I Mr Potter?" McGonagall said. "It came to my attention last night that I failed to give you two the detentions. It must have slipped my mind or something." However Harry knew the look McGonagall had on wasn't one where she forgot things. It was an angry face. But Harry wasn't too sure if it was pointed at him and Neville.

"Oh yeah." came Neville's voice quietly next to him.

"Yes... well for your detentions you will meet Mr. Filch in the great hall at eleven tonight." McGonagall told them. "You can go now."

Neville left the room but before Harry did he turned back to speak to McGonagall.

"You didn't forget the detentions did you professor?" Harry said. McGonagall's head shot straight up and looked at Harry in the face. "Thank you professor. For trying to stand up for what is right."

"You sound like Professor Dumbledore Mr Potter." McGonagall said.

"Part of him is rubbing off on me. And if you don't mind me asking. It was Snape who reminded you of the detentions wasn't it?" Harry explored.



"You seem too smart for someone who is bottom of the class Mr Potter." McGonagall said.

"Me, I've always been clever. Haven't I always answered the questions right in class? Not trying to be bigheaded or anything." He added with a smile.

"I hope it shows in your exams." McGonagall said. "I've yet to see you do one piece of magic. No one has seen you do magic. And truthfully Mr Potter it is scarring me. You don't have a care in the world and yet you're so close to flunking out of this school. You have friends here and I must say, you're a damn good seeker. And even a laugh at times. Yet I see you not trying in class. Professor Dumbledore told the teachers over Christmas break to go easy on you and not to worry about it. But I just can't help worrying Mr Potter. You're in my house. And I want what's best for everyone in it."

"I'll be alright professor." Harry said.

"Let's hope so." She replied.

Come eleven thirty Harry and Neville walked down to the entrance hall to see Malfoy and Filch waiting for them.

"Follow me." Filch said and they walked outside and started to walk across the grass towards Hagrid's hut. "I bet you'll think twice about breaking school rules again wont ya. Hard work and pain is the best teachers around. Just a pity they let the old punishments die out. Hang you by the wrists and get whipped for an hour if you broke the rules. Still got chains in my office. Kept them well oiled in case they are ever needed again."

Neville looked at Harry suddenly scared and Harry gave him a reassuring smile. Soon Hagrid's hut came into view and Harry heard Hagrid shout out to them.

"You're finally 'ere Filch. I want to get started." He called out.

Harry turned and saw Neville now smiling at him. "You think you're going to be enjoying yourself do ya?" Filch said seeing Neville's smile. "Well guess again. It's into the forest for ya and I'll be very much mistaken if you come back out in one piece."

"The- the-the forest?" Malfoy squeaked out. "We can't go in there; there are all sorts of creatures in there. Werewolves I've heard."

Harry felt Neville shudder next to him but Harry seemed to remember Neville being more scared last time around.

"Best you look out then isn't it." Filch said, glee written over his face. "Should of thought of that before picking a fight in front of everybody in the great hall."

When they finally got to Hagrid's hut Hagrid himself came out to meet him with Fang following in his footsteps. "'bout time. Alright there Harry, Neville." Hagrid greeted them.

"You shouldn't be too friendly with them Hagrid." Filch said coldly. "They are here after all to be punished."

"So that's why you're so late." Hagrid said. "Giving them a lecture. That's not your place teh do that, you're a caretaker. No say in how they students get punished. Forget everything that he said guys."

"I'll be back for them at dawn." Filch said. "For what's left of them." And with that he hobbled away up to the castle.

"I'm not going into that forest." Malfoy said "There are werewolves in there."

"Werewolves are human beings just like the rest of us and they are only werewolves one night of the month. The full moon. As long as it's not a full moon you're fine." Harry said looking up at the moon. "Well, will you look at that, it's a full moon." His words caused Malfoy to start shaking with fear.

"I am not going in." Malfoy said defiantly.

"Yeh are if yeh want ter stay at Hogwarts." Hagrid said fiercely. "Yeh did wrong and now you have ter pay for it."

"But this is servants stuff. Not for students to do. I thought we would be writing lines or something. If my father knew..." Malfoy said but was cut off by Hagrid.

"E'll tell yer that's how it is a Hogwarts." Hagrid said. "Writing lines, what good does that do teh a person? You'll do something useful or you'll leave. If yeh think yeh parents would rather you be expelled than I suggest you go start packing." Malfoy just stood there looking at Hagrid then lowered his head to look at the ground.

"Right then." Hagrid said now addressing all three of them. "Listen' carefully 'cause its dangerous what we are going to do tonight and I don't want anyone hurt. Follow me." Hagrid then led them over to the edge of the forest. Near the clump of trees that was the forbidden forest there were a couple of drops of unicorn blood.

"Do you guys know what this stuff is?" Hagrid asked them.

Malfoy and Neville shook their heads. "Unicorn blood." Harry answered.

"Right you are Harry." Hagrid said nodding. "There's a unicorn in there that's been hurt badly. This is the second one in a week. I found one dead last Wednesday. We're going to try and find the unicorn and if we have to...put it out of its misery."

"And if the thing that hurt the unicorn finds us?" Malfoy said, quite frightened now.

"We all sing Alleluia Malfoy isn't here anymore to annoy us." Harry said.

"Harry. Back off. That's not nice. I know he can be annoying but that's taken it a bit far don't you think?" Hagrid scolded him.

"Sorry." Harry muttered and he saw Malfoy smirking at him.

"Malfoy. There's nothing in this forest that will hurt yeh if yer with me or Fang." Hagrid told him. "And stick to the path. Right, we're going to split up into two parties. There's so much blood around we don't really know where it is. Must be staggering around a lot last night."

"I want Fang!" Malfoy said straight away.

"Okay you got Fang." Hagrid said and Malfoy sneered at Harry. "But I warn ya. He's a right coward." This caused Malfoy to go ghostly white.

"Right so Malfoy, Neville and Fang as one group and me and Harry as another group." Hagrid said. Neville and Malfoy went one way and Hagrid and Harry went the other.

"You think it was okay putting Neville and Malfoy together?" Harry asked Hagrid.

"Why won't it be?" Hagrid said. "I know you guys don't like each other but he won't do anything silly whilst in here will he?"

"Knowing Malfoy like I do... yes he properly will." Harry told Hagrid as they moved deeper into the forest.

It was thirty minutes before they saw another spec of blood.

"Let's hope the others are doing better" Hagrid said before he suddenly stopped and appeared to be listening hard. "Get behind that tree." Hagrid shouted grabbing Harry and hoisting him behind the tree. Harry was dead quiet as he heard the slithering of a cloak along the path.

"I knew something was in here that shouldn't be." Hagrid said.

Harry was still looking to where Quirrell and Voldemort had just been five meters away from them.

They suddenly heard another rustle of leaves and Hagrid put an arrow in his crossbow and got ready to fire. Into the clearing came the centaur Harry knew to be called Ronan.

"Oh it's you Ronan." Hagrid sighed with relief. "How are you doing?"

"Good evening Hagrid." Ronan said. "You weren't going to shoot me were you?"

"Can't be too careful Ronan. There's somethin' in 'ere tha's not all that good. Attacking unicorns." Hagrid said.

"So I noticed." Ronan said. He looked at Harry for a second before greeting him. "Good evening friend of Hagrid, may I ask for your name?"

"Harry. Harry Potter." Harry replied.

"Nice to meet you Harry Potter." Ronan said. "Student up at the school?" and Harry nodded. "Do you learn much up there?"

"Enough." Harry replied. Ronan looked at him. He seemed to Harry that he was checking him out.

"Enough, well that is better than nothing." Ronan said to Harry. He sighed and looked up at the sky. "Mars is bright tonight."

"Yeah." Said Hagrid looking up at the sky. Harry looked up too but couldn't tell which one was Mars. "Listen, I'm glad we ran into yeh. A unicorn has been hurt. You don't know anything 'bout tha' do yeh?"

Ronan continued to look up at the sky and then sighed. "Always the innocent that get hurt first. Has been for ages, and so it is now."

"Yeah but 'ave you seen anything unusual?" Hagrid asked him.

"Mars is unusually bright tonight." Ronan responded.

"Yeah but I was thinkin' of somethin' more close to home." Hagrid said. "So anything unusual?"

"The forest hides many secrets." Ronan said.

"Ones that you are privileged to?" Harry asked.

Ronan was just about to answer when the centaur Harry knew as Bane came out and stood next to Ronan.

"Well 'ello Bane." Hagrid said. "How are yeh doing?"

Bane nodded his head towards Hagrid. "Good evening. I am fine. Just as I hope you are tonight."

"Yeah well I've just been asking Ronan 'ere. Have you've seen anythin' odd lately tonight?" Hagrid asked him

"Mars is bright tonight." Bane said looking up at the sky.

"So we've 'eard." Hagrid said clearly annoyed. "Well, if either of yeh two know anythin' let me know will ya? Well we'll be off then."

Once Hagrid and Harry got a few meters away from the centaurs so they couldn't hear them Hagrid sighed. "Never try and get a straight answer out of 'em. They will never give ya one." Harry didn't say anything and continued off with Hagrid along the path. They walked for a further twenty minutes when Hagrid stopped suddenly to look up at the sky. Harry looked up to see red sparks up in the air. 'I'm so going to kill Malfoy one day soon.' Harry thought whilst Hagrid told him to hide whilst he went and fetched them.

Harry waited for forty minutes before he heard Hagrid, Malfoy and Neville come back. Harry could overhear what Hagrid was fuming about.

"I can't believe yeh." Hagrid said. "Sneaking up on Neville like that, yeh think this is a game? We'll be lucky to catch anythin' now because of yeh. If another unicorn gets hurt I'll be blaming it on you. Right we're changing things around. Neville yer with me. Harry goes with this pillock and Fang." Hagrid said then bent down lower so only Harry can hear. "Sorry but 'e'll have less chance scaring you. And we need to get this done. You were right about pairing them two up."

"It's okay." Harry said quietly back to him. Five minutes later found Harry, Fang and Malfoy heading deeper and deeper into the forest.

"What did you do to Neville, Malfoy?" Harry asked him as they walked along the path.

"Snuck up on him, that's all." Malfoy said. "What has it go to do with you anyway Potter?"

"You did more than that." Harry said. "You don't think I know one of my best mates. It takes a lot to scare Neville now. He isn't the kid that we meet on the train. Not much can scare him now. And he's even getting better at magic."

"Yes. Soon you will be left behind." Malfoy said. "You don't scare me Potter anymore."

"Well well well." Harry said to a confused Malfoy. "A Malfoy admitting he was scared. You don't see that everyday. That's definitely some blackmail material there... "

"You wouldn't even try." Malfoy said sneering.

"Watch me." Harry replied.

"Its not like anyone is going to believe you squib." Malfoy said.

"Keep talking and you'll find out how much of a squib I really am." Harry said.

Malfoy was just about to reply when Harry noticed the dead unicorn and the wound on its side, on the ground a couple of feet away from them. Harry nodded over to it so Malfoy would realise it was there. All of a sudden Harry heard a slither of a cloak and out came a hooded figure from the nearby bushes. Quirrell/Voldemort. He lowered his head and began to drink from the unicorn's wound.

"AAAAAARGH!" Malfoy screamed out and bolted away. Harry was just about to lift his wand when Harry felt pain in his scar he hadn't felt for years. Ever since he came back in time the scar had been quiet. And even during the year his scar never hurt. But now all of a sudden Harry felt like he was being poked with white hot knives. He tested his Occlumency shields and noticed that they were still up. But then, if they were still up, how come his scar was still hurting.

Harry noticed another centaur jump over him. Firenze if he remembered correctly. He saw the centaur run at Voldemort and chase him away. Harry supposed that Voldemort was too weak at the moment to fight. The centaur came back over to Harry and knelt down beside him.

"Are you alright?" Firenze said.

"Yeah I'm fine. Just a headache." Harry said.

"You are the Potter boy." Firenze said. "The forest is not safe at this time. Especially for you. Climb onto my back, I will take you back to Hagrid." All of a sudden Ronan and Bane came into the clearing.

"FIRENZE!" Bane thundered. "What are you doing? You have a human on your back! Have you no shame? Are you a common mule?"

'No he isn't. Donkeys have floppy ears. He doesn't.' Harry thought. He knew if he said that out loud he would be very lucky to get out of the forest alive, or in one piece.

"Do you realize who this is?" Firenze bellowed back. "This is the Potter boy. The quicker he leaves this forest the better."

"What have you been telling him?" growled Bane. "Remember, we are sworn not to set ourselves against the heavens. Have we not read what is to come in the movement of the planets?"

"The planets are wrong." Harry said quietly.

All of them turned to look at him now. "And what would a human know about it?" Bane shouted at him.

"Mars is bright tonight." Harry said quietly. "Its funny that Mars is the planet of war. Mars being bright mean there is a war coming." There was silence that followed that statement. "But it's wrong." Harry continued. "There will be no war. There might be a battle but there will be no war."

"And why may I ask would the planets let you into that secret?" Ronan asked.

"Who said they did?" Harry said.

"It still doesn't give Firenze the excuse to have a human on his back!" Bane shouted.

"I'm sure Firenze thought it for the best." Ronan said quietly as he pawed the ground nervously.

"For the best! What is it to do with us? Centaurs are concerned with what has been foretold. It's not our business to run around after stray humans, to let them use us like donkeys in our forest!" Bane shouted.



"Do you not see that unicorn?" Firenze bellowed at Bane. "Do you not understand why it was killed? Or have the planets not let you in on that little secret? I set myself against what is lurking in this forest, Bane, yes, with humans alongside me if I must." With that Firenze turned and galloped away. After a few minutes Firenze came to a stop.

"Harry Potter, do you know what unicorn blood is used for?" Firenze asked.

"Its not..." Harry replied.

"Correct Harry Potter." Firenze said nodding. "It's a monstrous thing, to slay a unicorn. Only one who has nothing to lose but everything to gain would commit such a crime. The blood of a unicorn will keep you alive, even if you're an inch from death, but at a terrible price. You have slain something pure and defenceless to save yourself. You will have but a half life, a cursed life, from the moment the blood touches your lips."

"I know. There is no point in doing it." Harry said.

"Correct again Harry." Firenze said. "Unless there is something else you can drink. Something else that will bring you back to full strength and power. Something that will mean that you will never die. Harry, do you know what is being hidden in the castle this very moment?"

"The Philosopher's Stone." Harry replied. "The Elixir Of Life."

"And can you not think of anyone who would want that. Someone who has clung to live. Waiting their chance to come back?" Firenze asked.

"Voldemort." Harry said quietly.

Firenze nodded his head as Harry spotted Hagrid and Neville running towards them. Harry got down of the centaurs back.

"Hagrid, the unicorn's over there." Harry said pointing to where they just come from. "It's dead." Hagrid hurried over to the place Harry was pointing and Neville came running up to him.

"Harry, are you okay?" Neville asked.

"Fine, never better." Harry said shrugging.

"This is where I leave you." Firenze said. "The planets have been read wrong before. Even by centaurs. Let's hope you are right and this is one of those times." And with that he ran off into the depths of the forest.

When Harry and Neville got back to the common room the fire in the grate was down low and Ron was busy snoring on the couch. Luckily Hermione was still up so they only had to wake up Ron, which took some time. After managing to wake Ron up enough Harry went and explained what happened in the forest. But he left out the part about Mars.

"So Snape wants the stone for You-Know-Who?" Ron asked.

"Yes." Harry replied. "Voldemort is waiting in the forest for Snape to steal the stone. Snape wants the stone for Voldemort. And we thought he wanted it for himself to get rich."

"Stop saying the name!" Ron said terrified.

"Ron, fear of the name only increases fear of it self." Harry said. "So Snape's going to try and steal the stone for Voldemort. Well I ain't going to let that happen. If that happens, Voldemort won't be able to be stopped and he will just kill me. Although Bane will be happy I suppose."

"Harry, everyone says Dumbledore's the only one You-Know-Who was ever afraid of. With Dumbledore around, You-know-who won't touch you. Anyway who says centaurs are right? It sounds like fortune telling to me, and Professor McGonagall says that's a very imprecise branch of magic." Hermione said.

"Yeah. Imprecise. Apart from centaurs who are the most adept at reading the future. More than humans anyway." Harry replied. Thirty minutes later Harry left the other three to continue talking whilst he went to bed to get some shut eye. Although he was in bed he couldn't really sleep. He kept going over what he learnt in the forest. And it was scaring him.

'Mars is bright tonight.' That saying kept on going over and over in Harry's mind, not letting Harry go into the rest of sleep. It kept him awake for the rest of the night. Mars was the planet of war. When Mars is bright it means war is coming. Harry rolled over onto his other side.

"Please don't let there be a war." Harry said to himself. "Please let me win the fight when I meet Voldemort in the graveyard. Please don't let there be a war."

A/N: heya guys next chapter. And not all of it was copied from the book! I hope you guys enjoyed. There are 2 more chapters of PS. Then it's onto the COS. And next chapter they're after the stone!

Disclaimer: I Do Not Own Harry Potter

Harry was getting rather nervous now that the end of year exams were coming up. The first two days were the written exams that Harry knew he aced. However, come the last two final days it was the practical exams. They were something Harry wasn't sure whether he was looking forward to or not. Luckily, the first practical exam was Potions. And even though Harry knew Snape would try and fail him, he also knew that Dumbledore would step in to stop that from happening.

. Harry took a deep breath to gather his courage before opening the door and entering the room for his next exam. The exam after Potions happened to be Transfiguration, and he wasn't happy about it. Harry walked into the empty classroom to see Professor McGonagall sitting at her desk and on the desk was a mouse waiting to be transfigured into a snuff-box.

"Ah, Harry. Are you ready to try this?" McGonagall gently asked him. She was obviously not expecting much. Harry just nodded. It was a shame Harry had to break his squib act. Although it was a hassle to limit his magic like that, it made enemies underestimate him, and Harry couldn't complain about that. But for the first time since Christmas Harry realised that he had to do magic now. He wouldn't risk not being here next year to protect Ginny.

Harry turned to look at the mouse on the table and brought out his wand. "As part of the exam you are required to turn the mouse into a snuff box. You may begin when you are ready." McGonagall stated. Right then, Harry decided that although he had to show magic he didn't have to show how much he knew . So he purposely said the incantation wrong two times before saying it right. Harry saw McGonagall's face change from the sadness of watching Harry fail two attempts , to shock when the mouse turned into a snuff box on the third try.

Harry smiled at her, waiting for her to speak, and when she didn't Harry decided to break the silence.

"So did I pass professor?" Harry asked.

McGonagall's face broke into a smile when she heard what Harry had asked. "It definitely seems so, Mr Potter. Although you do

realise in practical exams that you only get three chances to do the spell. But I've got to say I am extremely happy to see you performing magic. You obviously have been studying hard. Five points Mr Potter. It would be more, but technically we're not supposed to give out points in exams. Good luck with the rest of your exams Harry."

After that Harry breezed through the rest of the exams with varying success. In Herbology, he succeeded, on the first try, in identifying the plants in Greenhouse 1 and demonstrating care for a few of them as no magic was needed. For DADA, which was proctored by Dumbledore himself, Harry adopted a lazy posture and silently cast a blindingly bright Lumos with a slight flick of his wand. Dumbledore wrote down that the boy succeeded on the second try. Late that night, Harry quickly pointed out Venus and a few stars for Astronomy, rattled down their locations on paper, and confidently left the class half an hour early to prepare for bed. It was in Charms where Harry repeated his act in Transfiguration, that is, fail on the first two tries and succeed dismally on the last ..

Throughout all of this, Harry never mentioned to Hermione and the others that he was now doing magic. He thought that it would be a nice surprise for Hermione when they received their test results back and she saw Harry had passed the practical exams.

Although the last two days were practicals, Harry's last exam was another written one. History of Magic. Even if it was easy, Harry had to cheer with the others when the exam was finally over. Now that the exams were over, the students were free to mill around for the rest of the day.

Harry, Ron, Neville and Hermione were discussing the just-finished History of Magic exam as they wandered outside, their wanderings taking them toward the lake, when Harry heard someone trying sneak up on them. Harry whipped out his wand and pointed it straight at Malfoy who was crouched ten feet away.

"My god Malfoy, haven't I warned you enough times to stop bothering us?" Harry said, annoyed. It was so tempting to hex him. And now that his squib act was broken, he really didn't have an excuse not to. Malfoy looked at Crabbe and Goyle who were standing next to each other just behind him.

"Potter. You're pathetic, you think that you can just warn people off and they're going to get scared of you and do what you want." Malfoy sneered. "I'm not scared of you. Tell you what, I will give you a free shot at me." Malfoy said putting his wand back into his pocket and turned around as if to add insult to injury. "I'll give you one free shot," he called out behind him.

Harry smiled gently to himself and pointed his wand to Malfoy's backside. He muttered "Pardos Minui" before looking at Malfoy who had turned back around to sneer at him. Harry realised that Malfoy didn't hear Harry's spell and this caused Harry to enjoy the moment even more. Harry noticed after a couple of seconds that Malfoy started fidgeting. Harry turned to look at Ron, Neville, and Hermione and saw they were looking at Malfoy with curiosity. Harry looked back at Malfoy and noticed he had his hand close to his buttocks and was fiddling about.

"What's wrong Malfoy?" Harry asked him, trying not to burst out laughing.

"What did you do!" Malfoy hissed out whilst trying to sort his pants out.

"I think it's called a WEDGY!" Harry shouted the last word out and then burst out laughing with Ron and Neville whilst Malfoy ran back to the castle, fidgeting with his pants on the way. It took the three of them five minutes before they settled back down again.

"Harry, where did you learn that spell?" Hermione asked.

"Sirius." Harry squeezed out between laughs, and that was the truth. It was one of the first spells Sirius taught him.

"Congrats mate." Neville said as he slapped Harry on the back. "I guess you aren't much of a squib now, are you?" Harry just smiled, laughing with Ron, who was attempting to recreate Malfoy's expression, but failing miserably since he was laughing so hard. Hermione was standing to the side, but Harry caught her beaming smile when he glanced at her. Harry smiled back as they continued down the path towards the lake, thoughts of flopping under the cool shade of the trees nearby egging them on.

"Man it feels so good to be free." Neville joked as the group finally settled down.

"No more revision." Ron exclaimed. "You should be glad Harry, not worried. You can do magic finally and we've got a week until we find out how bad we actually did. Enjoy the moment."

"I'm just worried about the stone that's all." Harry said, his face completely sincere. He wasn't worried about his grades because he knew that he had passed all of the exams. Not with as high of grades as he would like, but he didn't want the others to be suspicious considering how poor his performance was throughout the year.. However, the stone bothered him more than he would like. What happened if he failed this time? What if Voldemort succeeded in taking the stone this time?

"Harry relax, the stone is perfectly safe as long as Dumbledore is around. Anyway, we don't have any proof that Snape found out how to get past Fluffy. He nearly had his leg removed the last time he tried. So it's not likely he's going to try again anytime soon. And Hermione will ride a broom before Hagrid lets Dumbledore down. No offence Hermione." Ron said.

"He's right, Harry," Hermione agreed, shooting a venomous glare at the redhead, "Hagrid would never betray Dumbledore." .

"You're right... you're right..." Harry said, nodding. Now, Harry prayed his acting skills was believable. "Unless..." Harry sat straight up, looking at Hagrid's hut.

"Why the hell didn't I think of it before!" Harry exclaimed as he stood up and dashed for Hagrid's hut. 'Let's just hope they take in the act,' Harry thought as he reached Hagrid's hut, slightly winded. He knocked on the door frantically to complete the act. The others finally arrived, asking why he was in such a hurry.

"Well 'ullo 'Arry." Hagrid greeted when he finally opened the door. He looked at the group gathered before him and noticed their tired state, "You look all hot and bothered. Why enough would you want to go running in this heat. Want a drink to cool off?"

"Yes please Hag..." Ron said before Harry cut him off.

"No Hagrid, we're in a bit of a hurry." Harry said. He prayed no one asked him why he was asking these certain questions. "The man who you won Norbert off of, what did he look like?"

"Dunno," Hagrid replied "he never took 'is 'ood off." Ron, Hermione and Neville all looked at each other whilst Harry went and tried to ask another question but before he could Hagrid answered the other three's silent question. "You get a lot o' weird folk in the Hog's Head. That's one of the pubs down into th' village. Mighta been a dragon dealer mightin' he. I never saw his face. Kept his 'ood up all the time."

"What did you talk about, Hagrid...? Was Hogwarts mentioned...?" Harry asked knowing full well the answer.

"Yeah it might 'ave come up. 'ang on." Hagrid said trying to remember. "Yeah 'e asked what I did. And I told 'im that I was the games keeper here. Looked after the grounds and the animals in the forest. And I also told 'im 'ow much I would love to 'ave a dragon. After that I can't remember too much 'cause 'e kept buying me drinks. But I remember 'im saying 'e 'ad a dragon egg and we could play cards for it if I wanted. But 'e 'ad to be sure I could handle the dragon so 'e asked what exact creatures I looked after. 'e didn't want it to go to a bad 'ome see. So I told 'im after Fluffy a dragon should be easy."

"And he was interested in Fluffy?" Neville asked. Harry looked at Neville. Harry reckoned Neville knew where this was heading but Hermione and Ron were still at a loss.

"Well, who wouldn't be?" Hagrid said. "'ow many threeheaded dogs do you know? Especially around 'ogwarts. So I told him, Fluffy's a piece o' cake as long as you know 'ow to calm him down. You just play a little piece of music and 'e falls right off to sleep." Hagrid then turned his head to the others in shock horror at what he just said. "Forget I told ya tha'. I should not have told ya tha'. 'ey wait, where ya goin'?"

Harry, Ron, Hermione and Neville ran back up to the school and didn't speak until they reached the entrance hall. "We've got to tell Dumbledore." Hermione said "But where does he live. Anyone know? Harry?"



Harry was just about to answer when he heard McGonagall's voice carry over to them. "What are you four doing in here?" Harry turned to see her descending the stairs while carrying a stack of books.

"Professor McGonagall, we need to see Professor Dumbledore." Hermione said.

"Yeah it's important." Ron seconded.

"See Professor Dumbledore?" McGonagall repeated. "May I ask why?"

"We'd rather not say." Harry started.

"Yeah, it's a secret." Ron finished for him. Harry hung his head. That isn't what Harry wanted to hear come out of his friend's mouth. And, apparently, neither did Professor McGonagall.

"Professor Dumbledore left the school about ten minutes ago." McGonagall coldly explained. "He received an urgent owl from the Ministry of Magic and flooed off for London at once."

"He's gone?" Ron asked.

"Now?" Neville continued.

"But this is really important Professor." Hermione insisted.

"Something that is more important than the Ministry of Magic Ms Granger?" McGonagall asked her.

"Yeah it's about the Philosopher's Stone." Harry said ignoring his friends' incredulous stares as he threw all caution out of the window. Heck they told her last time.

Harry saw McGonagall drop the books she was carrying. They landed with a lighter thump than he expected, apparently the books were lighter than they appeared. "How did you know..." she stuttered out, shock written over her face.

"Professor, we know someone is going to try and steal the stone. You need to get Dumbledore back here as soon as possible." Harry

told her. Harry couldn't believe he forgot to tell Dumbledore about the fake ministry note.

"Professor Dumbledore will be back tomorrow." McGonagall primly said. "I do not know how you four know about the stone but rest assured it is very well protected."

"But..." Ron began.

"I do know what I'm talking about believe or not. I suggest you all go outside and enjoy the weather." McGonagall said and the four of them went away. However they didn't go back outside. As soon as McGonagall was out of view the four of them hurried up the stairs towards the common room.

"It's tonight." Harry said. "It's got to be tonight."

"But what can we do?" Neville said.

Ron was just about to speak when Hermione gasped. Harry turned around to see Snape looking at them suspiciously.

"Good afternoon." Snape said. Harry was shocked to the core. Snape being polite. What was wrong with this world? "You shouldn't be inside on a day like this."

"We were..." Neville began. The boy might have been more confident, but one year was definitely not going to be enough when dealing with Snape, as the boy was still quivering.

"Shut it Longbottom, you could never in a million years come up with a good excuse." Snape snapped at him.

"Mind if I give it a shot?" Harry said. He knew it wasn't really a good time to crack jokes but he really couldn't let that one pass him.

Snape turned to Harry. "You want to be more careful Potter." Snape said. "Hanging around corridors like this. People would believe that you were up to something. And this reminds me. I just spoke to Mr Malfoy. He claimed that you jinxed him down by the lake."

"Me sir?" Harry said. "But I'm a squib."

"Don't tell lies Potter." Snape hissed out. "All that the teachers could do the past week was rave about the fact you could actually do magic. I mean are you a wizard or not. Of course you would be able to do magic. Although not very well I might add. You want to be more careful Potter anyhow. Wandering the corridors like this, people might think that you're... well... up to something. It would be disappointing if Gryffindor lost house points this close to the end of year. Even though Slytherin is already in the lead."

With that Snape left them, striding off towards the teachers staff room. Once the four of them arrived at the common room they sat down in their usual places by the fire.

"We need to make sure Snape doesn't do anything." Ron said.

"Right, Hermione go to the staff room and wait for Professor Snape. Once he makes for the stone, follow him." Harry said even though he knew she would fail he needed something to pass the time. He really didn't want to go down the corridor until tonight.

"Why me?" Hermione asked.

"Isn't it obvious." Ron said "You can pretend that you are waiting for Professor Flitwick." Ron put on a high pitch voice. "Oh professor I think I got question fourteen b wrong."

"Alright, alright I'll do it." Hermione agreed as she gave another pointed glare at Ron. "As long as you shut that infernal racket," she continued as she jabbed him on the chest with a finger. Ron winced and quickly stopped with the voice.

"Now we need someone needs to watch the third floor corridor," Harry suggested.

"Yeah, me and Neville can do that." Ron said.

"But what does that leave Harry to do." Hermione said.

"I bet Hedwig could get to London pretty quickly if she tried. I'll send a letter to Dumbledore. Maybe we can get him back." Harry said and soon the four of them were heading off in different directions. Harry sprinted off but didn't go to the Owlery. He went into the hiding room

where Estelle and Simon stayed. "Estelle!" Harry shouted out as she flew towards him.

"What's up Harry?" she asked.

"Take me to the Owlery but make sure no one is there first." Harry told her, grabbing her tail feathers. Estelle gave him an indignant look and waited a couple of seconds before flaming them to the Owlery tower.

"HEDWIG." Harry called. Harry waited a minute before he saw her flying down towards him. Harry grabbed a spare parchment and quill and hurriedly wrote a note to Dumbledore. "Hedwig, hurry, take this to Dumbledore. you'll find him at the Ministry of Magic" Giving a nod to Estelle, who flamed out immediately, Harry left the owlery and returned to the common expected, Ron and Neville were already there.

"We tried mate." Ron said.

"Yeah but McGonagall saw us. She went off on us and then told us to leave." Neville explained.

"It's alright guys." Harry said sitting down at his favorite couch. "Maybe Hermione had better luck." It was then Hermione decided to come through the portrait hole.

"I'm really sorry guys." Hermione said sorrow in her voice. "Snape came out and asked me what I was doing. I said I was waiting for Professor Flitwick so he went to get him. I panicked and ran for it. But now I haven't got a clue where Snape went."

"Well, that's that then. We have no choice. We have to get to the stone first." Harry said.

"What?" Hermione queried.

"You're mad!" Ron barked out

"You sure there isn't another way?" Neville said.

"You'll get expelled." Hermione said. "Remember what McGonagall and Snape said."

"First off it's Snape we're trying to stop, so he has no say in this. Secondly, don't you understand what it would be like with Voldemort back?" Harry said, his future memories coming to the forefront of his mind. "Haven't you three been told what it was like with Voldemort running around? Neville, surely you're with me on this."

Neville looked up at Harry. "I hate doing this to you Neville but think of your parents. Think what they went through. With him back there is a possibility that could happen to other people." Neville continued to stare at Harry and then after a minute looked at the fire. "If Voldemort comes back there is a very likely possibility that there will be no Hogwarts to get expelled from. Losing points doesn't matter anymore compared to Voldemort killing you. Ron think of Ginny. Think what Voldemort might do to her. Hermione. You're a muggle born. Your family will be top of his hit list. He will want to kill you and your parents simply because you were born with muggle parents. Don't you understand this? We either try and get the stone before Voldemort or we die either way. Because with hell if I ever go over to the dark side. Voldemort killed my parents. I am not going to sit back and let Voldemort have a clean shot at us. I'm going to stand up to him and try and stop him."

"I'm with you Harry." Neville said looking away from the fire. "I'm coming with you."

"Yeah you're right Harry." Hermione said.

"But will the invisibility cloak cover all four of us?" Ron asked.

"We'll make it fit." Harry replied.

After dinner the four waited nervously by the fire in the common room as they waited for the other Gryffindors to go to bed. Eventually after two hours the common room was deserted. Harry went upstairs to grab the cloak and came back down to where the others were waiting for him.

Once Harry got back to the others Harry pointed his wand at the cloak and muttered "Engorgio." The cloak grew enough that it could cover all four of them nicely and they headed out towards the third floor. They didn't meet anyone until they arrived at the base of the staircase heading up to the third floor. Peeves was by the entrance

loosening the carpet so that students and faculty would later trip on the humps. As they got closer Peeves turned and looked straight at them..

"Who's there?" Peeves asked. "Know you there, even if I can't see you. Are you ghoulie or ghostie or a wee student beastie? I should call Filch you know. If something is creeping about unseen."

"Moi a wee student beastie? At least I know what you think of me Peeves and it hurts." Harry said, his voice coming out as clear as day in the silent hall He poked his head out from under the cloak.

Peeves fell out of the air with shock and hit the ground without a sound. Quickly picking himself up, the ghost started stammering."Harry! Didn't see you. Of course I didn't, seeing that you're invisible."

"Nice prank there Peeves." Harry said looking at the carpet.

"Why thank you Harry." Peeves cackled. "I'm glad you approve."

"We're kind of busy at the moment Peeves. Stay away from here tonight." Harry told the poltergeist as he moved his head back under the cloak.

"Okely Dokely" Peeves said and flew off through the wall.

"I know Hermione told me about you being able to tell Peeves what to do but that was bloody brilliant." Ron said.

"We need to keep going." Harry told them as they walked closer to the forbidden corridor. When they arrived they noticed that the door was already ajar. Harry slowly pushed the door open.

Harry threw the cloak off of them and instantly played a tune on the flute that he had received from Hagrid at Christmas. The tune was of a song Ginny used to sing in the future. Fluffy's eyes started drooping and within a minute Fluffy was fast asleep.

"Keep playing." Ron told him and Harry rolled his eyes.

'Duh'. Harry thought.

Ron stepped over Fluffy's paw and towards the trapdoor. Ron opened it and peered downwards.

"What can you see?" Hermione asked him.

"Nothing." Ron said. "We'll have to jump." Harry instantly starting waving his hand to capture Ron's attention. "You want to go first?" Ron asked him. Harry gave Ron a thumbs up. "Alright give the flute to Neville." Ron said, ignoring Neville's gaping expression

Harry gave the flute to Neville and a horribly discordant clash of squeaks and moans filled the air as Neville started playing straight away. Neville obviously couldn't play a flute as well as Harry, and Fluffy gave a restless rumble, freezing the four children in place, but bad playing seemed to be enough to keep the three-headed dog asleep.

"Ron don't follow until I tell you to okay." Harry whispered and Ron nodded. Harry jumped down the hole and Harry fell and fell through the air until he came to a stop with a flump. As soon as he got his bearings he struggled away from the Devil's Snare. Harry wasn't going to get caught in it this time. As soon as he was free, Harry called up to them to follow. Hermione arrived first, and sat there for a moment wondering about the softness of her landing. As the plant started creeping onto her, she realized the dangers of staying and struggled to escape the grasp of the plant in the center. She managed to move enough that Neville had a clear landing zone when he arrived. Up above, in the room that contained Fluffy, there was a low growl and a shout of surprise. It took Neville little time for him to recognize what he landed on and to get off of the plant immediately. He leapt out of the way just in time to avoid Ron hasty fall. Unlike the others, Ron failed to recognize the danger and he stayed sitting there for a moment too long even though they were hissing at him to move.

"Come on guys what's the matter? I'm moving." Ron said but found out that he couldn't. "What's going on? Help me."

"Ron keep still. It's Devil's Snare, the more you move the quicker it will kill you." Hermione ordered in a panicky voice. She tried pulling herself forward only to wince, as the plant surrounding her leg squeezed even more. "God I can't remember how to kill it."

"That's helpful!" Ron screamed out.

"Devil's Snare hates fire." Neville said.

"Yes of course!" Hermione smiled shakily then her face got scared.  
"But we have no wood."

Harry whipped out his wand and pointed it at the plant shouting "Incendio". Flames shot out of Harry's wand and in ten seconds Ron had fought his way over to the others, pulling Hermione out along the way.

"Boy Harry, I'm sure glad you chose today to start doing magic." Ron said to him. Ron turned to Hermione. "No wood? Are you sure you're feeling alright Hermione."

"I'm sorry Ron." Hermione said. "I just forgot. I don't understand why."

"It's okay." Ron said. "Come on, lets continue." So the four of them continued along the path until they came to a brightly lit chamber. Harry looked up to see the flying keys.

"Do you think they will attack us if we try and cross the room?" Ron asked.

"They're not birds Ron, they're keys." Harry told him as he walked to the door on the opposite side of the room.

Once all four of them arrived, Neville tried the door. It was locked. Undeterred, he pulled out his wand and incanted "Alohomora." Nothing happened. Neville looked at the others and shrugged. "It was worth a try."

Harry pointed over to the broomsticks in the far corner. "I think we need to try and catch the right one." The others looked at where he was pointing and Harry noticed that Hermione and Neville were getting nervous.

"There are hundreds of them." Hermione moaned.

"We're looking for a big old fashioned one, probably silver like the door handle." Ron said examining the lock.



They all seized a broomstick and flew up into the air. They flew for ten minutes before Harry spotted the one they wanted. He flew after it but it was too quick. Soon the others had noticed Harry flying wildly around the room and correctly guessed that he was following the key. They flew over and joined him in the chase.. After cornering it Harry seized it and flew down. With a vicious jab, he stuffed it in the lock. As soon as the door was unlocked the key took flight again, but not before fluttering in his face a few times as if it were angrily cursing him off.

They went through the door, only to find a dark empty room ten feet wide and ten feet long. There was no visible light source, however a dim blackish glow seemed to envelope the room, making it possible to see, but giving the room an eerie quality. Nothing was in the room except for a door on the other side of the room.

"Well, this one is easy," Ron said as he walked over to the door on the opposite side of the room.. "Erm guys?" Ron said uneasy.

"What Ron?" Harry said. He didn't like this. This wasn't here last time.

"There's no keyhole or door handle." Ron said looking at Harry. "And it won't push open."

Harry looked at the other door they just came through and sighed in relief when it did have a door handle.

"You can go back but not forward." Hermione said. "What are we going to do now?"

Harry touched the knobless door, only to jerk his hand back in surprise when a jolt of magic flared through his hand.

"This is Sirius's." he realized.

"What?" Hermione asked. The others were also staring at him, and it was then that Harry knew that he had said that aloud.

"Think about it." Harry said as he turned away from the door. "The keys were Flitwick's idea. The Devil's snare was Sprout's," Harry counted, using his fingers to keep track, "...and Fluffy was Hagrid's

test. That leaves Sirius's, McGonagall's, Quirrell's, Snape's, and something Dumbledore himself did." At the others' nod, Harry continued, "McGonagall's test will probably have some sort of transfiguration. Quirrell's will have something to do with the Dark Arts," Harry paused for a moment to think, "Probably a dark creature, because that is all that he teaches. Snape's probably has something to do with potions. Dumbledore's test will be the last line of defence, and it will probably involve the actual stone itself. So that only leaves Sirius."

"Okay so you know Sirius better than anyone. Heck, he's your godfather. So what do you think this is?" Neville asked.

"Don't know." Harry said as he gave a half-hearted shrug. He walked up to the door and put his right hand on the door again. Like last time, Harry felt a jolt as his hand brushed against the wood work. Why would the door have magic in it?. "Mm I wonder. A password maybe?" Harry said aloud.

"That would make sense, but what password?. That could be anything." Hermione moaned.

Harry just smirked and she looked on confused. "Like Neville said, I probably know more about Sirius than anyone else. I have an idea what the password might be." Harry put his hand on the door and said aloud. "I solemnly swear I'm up to no good." Harry waited but the door stayed closed.

"Well I'm out of ideas." Harry said with a helpless look.

"Harry it's protecting the stone." Hermione reminded him. "Why would someone up to no good be allowed through? Only someone with good intentions should be allowed through."

"Okay, okay." Harry said. "I solemnly swear I'm up to good." Harry joked. However he stopped laughing when he heard a click and the door opened up to let them through. "Okay I was just joking with that." Harry said surprised that it actually worked. 'How would Quirrell guess that?' He thought as they walked into the gigantic room with the chessboard. The white and black pieces stood motionless in their relative squares, ready for the game to start.

"What's this? We have to play to get past?" Neville joked.

"Yup" Harry said and Neville stopped laughing when he saw that Harry was serious. He turned to Ron and clapped the redhead on the back. "Your moment to shine mate."

Ron stared at the chessboard for a moment before turning to Harry and nodding.

"Tell us what to do." Hermione said to Ron, prompting him to start acting.

Ron thought for a moment before making a decision. "Okay so I guess we have to take a place of a chess piece to get across," as he said this, he was looking at Harry for confirmation. At Harry's nod, he continued. "Harry, take the place of that bishop. Hermione go next to him and take that Rook. Neville take the other Rook. I'll be that Knight."

"White always moves first in chess." Ron said and as he said that a white pawn had moved two spaces forward. Soon Ron was directing the black pieces as a general would order his troops. "Harry move diagonally four spaces to the right." Harry moved and the game went on. When it came for the blacks to lose a piece Hermione suddenly got very nervous.

"Ron you don't think its going to be like... Real Wizard chess?" Hermione asked him.

"Pawn to E5." Ron shouted. The black pawn shuffled to its designated space.. There was a tremendous crack as a neighboring bishop suddenly pounced ,delivering a tremendous blow with its scepter that shattered the black pawn into several and the others watched as the bishop dragged the remaining bits off the chessboard. "Yes Hermione," Ron said whilst gulping. "I think it's going to be exactly like wizard's chess."

The battle was fierce but going well. When a white piece took a black, Ron always managed to find some way to counter attack and take twice as many white pieces.

"Let me think..." Ron muttered to himself. Ron looked at the white queen and then around him. "Yes... it's the only way...I've got to be taken."

"WHAT? NO!" screamed Hermione.

"Ron, mate! Do you know what you're doing?" Neville asked in a panicked voice.

"That's chess." Ron said to them. "You have to make some sacrifices! Harry you're with me."

"No. But I know arguing with you is no point. You're going to do it anyway." There was a strange expression on Harry's face as he said this.

"I have to move to that spot," Ron explained pointing a spot three spaces in front and one square to the right, "The queen will have to take me since my move will put their king in check. Then Harry will be free to checkmate the king." Ron explained.

"There's got to be another way!" Hermione screamed at him.

"Do you want to stop Snape or not?" Ron said, a quiver was heard in his brave voice. "We are wasting time arguing. If we don't hurry up he will already have the stone! And don't hang around once you've won." Before the others had a chance to react, Ron shouted out his next move and the horse that he was riding on leapt over the opposing queen and landed heavily on its space.. The queen wasted little time in stepping from a nearby square to strike Ron off of his mount. Hermione shrieked as Ron flopped to the ground, but she retained enough sense to remain in her square.

Now that the queen had moved out of his path, Harry was free to move three spaces back and to the left. .No words were exchanged as the white king took off his crown and threw it down at Harry's feet. Harry, Hermione and Neville rushed to Ron to see if he was alright.

"Neville, will you stay with him and make sure he's alright?" Harry asked. Neville just nodded. Harry and Hermione took one look at each other and walked through the door and into a torch-lit corridor. Harry looked at Hermione and he could tell she was worrying.

"What if...?" Hermione started.

"He's going to be fine." Harry said. "Neville's with him. He'll be fine." They reached another door and inside they saw an unconscious troll. The smell was horrible so, without asking any questions, they quickly hurried to the next room.

As soon as they stepped inside a fire immediately sprang up in the doorway leading onwards and backwards. The one leading backwards was coloured purple. The one leading forwards was black. In the middle of the small room was a table and on it were different sized potion bottles. Next to the bottles was a piece of paper with writing on it. Hermione picked it up and read it out loud:

Danger Lies before you, whilst safety lies behind,  
Two of us will help you, whichever you would find,  
One among us seven will let you move ahead,  
Another will transport the drinker back instead,  
Two among our number hold only nettle wine,  
Three of us are killer, waiting hidden in line,  
Chose, unless you wish to stay here for evermore,  
To help you in your choice, we give you these clues four:  
First, however slyly the poison tries to hide,  
You will always find some on nettles wines left side;  
Second, different are those that stand at either end,  
But if you would move onwards, neither is you friend;  
Third, as you see clearly, all are different size,  
Neither dwarf nor giant holds death in their insides;  
Fourth, the second left and second on the right  
Are twins once you taste them, though different at first sight.

(J.K. Rowling – Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone)

"Brilliant" Hermione breathed out. "This isn't magic. Its logic, a puzzle. A lot of great wizards haven't got an ounce of logic. They'd be stuck here for ever more."

"Okay so let's sort out those clues." Harry said and they read the piece of paper. Hermione kept walking down the aisle whilst Harry kept looking at the bottles. Before they knew it, He started picking each bottle up and shaking it before putting it back down.

"Harry what are you doing?" Hermione demanded as Harry stopped at the smallest bottle.

"Simple." Harry said. "This is Snape's defence is it not?" and Hermione just nodded her head. "So Snape will know which one will get him through the fire, they made a mistake of filling every bottle up to the brim. However..." he gave the one that he was holding a vigorous shake, a faint sound of sloshing liquid was heard, " "...this one is half empty. So it must be the one that Snape took. He isn't dead on the floor and we didn't meet him along the way so that means he's gone forward. This is the potion that will let us continue forward. You just need to work out which one to take us back to Ron and Neville so that we can return later." Harry explained.

"That is brilliant Harry. Hang on" Hermione said as she scanned the piece of paper again. She suddenly grabbed the rounded bottle at the end of the line. "This one will take us back towards Ron and Neville."

"Okay you drink that and get back to Ron and Neville." Harry said despite Hermione starting to protest "Grab brooms from the flying room, they'll help you get up the trapdoor and past Fluffy. Go straight to Professor McGonagall, I've already sent a letter to the headmaster so he should be back very soon. Ask McGonagall to take you to him. Explain to him what's happening. We need him. I can hold Snape off for a while. But only for a while."

"But what if You-Know-Who is there?" Hermione asked, unhappy with Harry's decision.

"How many times have I told you three to call him Voldemort." Harry said, annoyed. "Fear of the name only increases fear of itself."

"You're a great wizard. You know that Harry." Hermione said.

"Come on Hermione. I only just managed to start doing magic." Harry said.

"Magic isn't everything Harry." Hermione said. "Friendship, Bravery. They're the important things. And Harry, be careful. Please."

Harry nodded. "You drink first." And Hermione gulped down the potion.

"It feels like ice." Hermione said.

"Go quickly" Harry urged to her. "Before it runs out." Hermione turned around to say something else. "GO!" Harry shouted at her before she could say anything and Hermione walked through the purple flames.

Harry turned and looked at the black flames. He gulped down the potion before striding through the flames and into the final room.

This was Dumbledore's test, for there, in the center of the room, stood the Mirror of Erised. As Harry descended the wide steps leading to the mirror, he seemed to be unaware that a pair of eyes, Quirrell's, were watching him from behind the mirror.

"Hello Potter." Quirrell said, stepping out from behind the mirror once Harry arrived at the bottom step. "I was wondering if I was going to see you here tonight."

"Oh goodie, I'm glad I didn't disappoint you." Harry replied, struggling to hide his lack of surprise.

Quirrell snapped his fingers and ropes sprang up, wrapping themselves around Harry. "You're too nosy to live Potter. Your wanderings around Halloween. I thought that you had figured me out then and came to stop me from seeing what was guarding the stone. Unfortunately, whilst everyone including yourself went after the troll Snape figured me out and headed me off at the third floor corridor. So not only did the troll fail to kill you, Snape also successfully lived

that night when that blasted dog of Hagrid's failed to devour him. Now please stop talking whilst I try and examine this wonderful mirror."

"You're not going to get it you know." Harry said out loud. "Do you really think Dumbledore is dumb enough to come up with something you or Voldemort could get past?"

"You dare speak my master's name?" Quirrell said, shuffling nervously in front of the mirror. "That's awfully dumb of you."

"Fear of the name only increases fear of itself." Harry replied, trying to keep Quirrell busy while he wandlessly loosened the ropes around him.

"You do not think Voldemort should be feared?" Quirrell questioned sweetly.

"Why fear someone who isn't in power at the moment." Harry countered.

"You had best watch your words, Potter. As soon as I get the stone, he will return to power. And I will be there by his side, as his most loyal servant." Quirrell said with a frightful expression on his face..

'I wonder where I've heard that before'. Harry thought detached from his situation.

"You know, I heard you sobbing a few days ago in an empty classroom. You aren't scared of your master are you? I mean he's your master, he's not actually going to hurt you. Oh wait I've heard that even though he killed when he was in power he really enjoyed torturing and killing his followers. After that, I always wondered where he found more." Harry said with a vicious smirk.

A flicker of fear quickly went over Quirrell's face. "Sometimes... I find it hard to follow my master's orders. He is a great wizard and I am weak."

"So he was actually in the classroom?" Harry said even though he already knew the answer. 'There!' he thought, and with a mental push the ropes binding him were ready to vanish in a moment of thought. Now, Harry had to wait for the right moment to attack.



"He is with me wherever I go." Quirrell answered quietly. "I met him when I travelled around the world. A foolish young man I was then, full of ridiculous ideas about good and evil. Lord Voldemort showed me how wrong I was. There is no good and Evil, there is only power and those too weak to seek it... Since then, I have served him faithfully, although I have let him down many times. He has had to be very hard on me. He does not forgive mistakes easily. When I failed to steal the stone from Gringotts, he was most displeased. He punished me... decided he would have to keep a closer watch on me..."

Quirrell cursed under his breath. "I don't understand... is the stone inside the mirror? Should I break it? I see myself presenting my master with the stone. But where is it! What do I need to do? Help me master!"

"Use the boy!" commanded a sickly voice. Even though he wasn't in sight, Voldemort had finally decided to show himself.

"Boy?" Harry questioned. "I do have a name you know, Tom."

"Tom?" Quirrell asked as he hesitated briefly in his advance. It was as good a time to act as any, Harry decided, as he vanished the ropes binding his hands and feet and charged at Quirrel with a roar. He didn't even make it halfway before a stone slab tilted up slightly and intercepted his foot, tripping him. . Harry flopped ungracefully onto the hard stone floor.

'Oh perfect, Harry. Yeah you're really going to defeat him like this." Harry winced before feeling something jabbing into his head. Harry didn't need to look up to know that it was Quirrell's wand.

"Come here Potter." Quirrell ordered "look in the mirror and tell me what you see. Or I will kill you."

Harry complied since Quirrell had the upper-hand at the moment. With a groan, and ignoring the sharp pains in his knees, he slowly stood up and walked up to the mirror. Harry smiled as his parents came into view as well as an older Ginny holding a little baby girl. A little different from last time, but enticing all the same.

"Well?" demanded Quirrell. "What do you see?"

"My Family." Harry replied.

"Get out of the way." Quirrell said.

Harry moved five spaces out of the way when he heard Voldemort screech. "I can not read him! He could be lying."

"Potter come back here! Tell me what you see." Quirrell said walking towards Harry.

"Let me speak to him face to face." Voldemort said.

"Master you are not strong enough!" Quirrell said.

"I have strength enough for this." Voldemort screamed out.

Harry watched as he saw Quirrell unwrap his turban to show the snake like face of one Lord Voldemort.

"Harry Potter..." Voldemort whispered.

"Tom." Harry replied and saw Voldemort's face retort in anger.

"Never call me that name!" Voldemort screamed out at him.

"Why? It is your name isn't it? Didn't it come from your muggle father?" Harry asked without expecting an answer. He raised his voice a little, "Quirrell you did know your master is half-blood, did you not?"

"What are these lies he's talking about master?" Quirrell whimpered out. The anger from Voldemort was hurting Quirrell.

"Doesn't matter." Voldemort hissed out. "Ignore them." then he turned his attention to Harry. "You dare mock me Potter?"

"How is it mocking when you're telling the truth?" Harry asked. "I never quite worked that out."

"TELL ME WHERE THE STONE IS!" Voldemort demanded. Looking upon Voldemort's angry face, Harry couldn't help but feel a little

fearful. This was one of the world's most powerful wizards. His next words dispelled that fear.

"No," Harry slowly said.

The time for talk was over.

"SEIZE HIM!" Voldemort ordered and Quirrell started waving his wand without hesitation. Without his wand, Harry had little choice but to body check Quirrell in an attempt to interrupt the spell. The sound of a wand clattering to the ground a moment later, as Quirrell lost his grip, went largely unheard.

Not expecting Harry's rash reaction, Quirrell had reflexively grabbed onto Harry as the air rapidly escaped from his lungs. From there, Quirrell started screaming in pain as one of his hands was latched onto Harry's exposed forearm. Harry himself felt hot knives stabbing viciously in his scar, and he struggled repeatedly to strengthen his Occlumency shields through the pain induced haze. He was largely unsuccessful, they were as strong as he could make them already. As soon as the pain came, it disappeared just as quickly when Quirrell released him. Left to deal with the aftershocks of pain, Harry had to bite back a small hint of satisfaction upon seeing his tormentor's expression of shock. Quirrell was horrified to see his hand disintegrate into dust.

"Master I cannot touch him" Quirrell moaned.

"THEN KILL HIM AND BE DONE WITH IT!" Voldemort screamed out. Harry and Quirrell both turned to look at the wand lying nearby. A moment passed before they both leaped into action. Quirrell managed to reach the wand first, but the wand wasn't Harry's intent. Before Quirrell could cast the killing curse, Harry had grabbed onto Quirrell's face. The stuttering professor started screaming in pain again as his face turned into ash before the rest of his body followed. Harry watched in mute fascination as a ghostly figure of a face that could only be Voldemort floated up from the body.

"Harry Potter!" he screamed as he flew up the stairs and away from Hogwarts.

'Well at least I didn't fall unconscious this time.' Harry thought as he looked around. Harry suddenly heard hurried footsteps and

looked behind him to see Professor Dumbledore rushing down the stairs to meet him.

"Harry, are you okay?" the aged Headmaster asked in concern.

"Never better, Albus, never better." Harry replied. "Sorry about not explaining about the fake note. Kind of slipped my mind."

Dumbledore waved his hand at the apology. "Never mind that now Harry. I guess everything is okay then?" He asked.

"Stone is safe and sound and still in the mirror." Harry replied.

"Good good." Dumbledore said. "I'm afraid I have to send you to the hospital wing, Pomfrey would be quite upset with me if I let you walk away without a health check. On the bright side, your friends are already there. And another spot of good news, Ron is awake now if you wanted to know."

"Thanks," Harry said. All of a sudden Harry felt dizzy and he had to stabilise himself before falling over.

"Harry?" Dumbledore asked concerned.

Harry looked at Albus and smiled. "I'm okay. Nothing to worry..." However Harry didn't manage to finish the sentence as blackness engulfed his vision.

A/N: Heya guys one more chapter of philosophers stone then that's it for that year. Hope you liked this chapter. Please note that this chapter was beta read twice by two different people and I am looking for another beta reader. Not that Mark isn't doing a great job. He is. But its always better to have more than one person to look over it. So if anyone interested please PM me or you can visit my yahoo group and ask there. The link is in my profile. Also I'm sad to say due to other commitments in real life. I do have to cancel my bi-weekly updates! Which means you will get the chapters as I write them and as my beta readers correct them. Sorry but that's just the way it is. But by no means am I ever abandoning this story. I just don't think I can continue with the bi-weekly updates. So anyone interested in being my second beta reader. Contact me. I would actually like someone who improves the writing as well as just looks

for mistakes! That would be brill but not a necessity. P.S. Yahoo  
yes the squib act is finished :P

Disclaimer: I Do No Own Harry Potter

Harry very slowly came out of unconsciousness to see three blurry figures around him. He wondered what was wrong with his eyesight then realized that he didn't have his glasses on. He tried to sit up but found that he didn't have the energy. What was wrong with him?

"I'm surprised he's still alive Albus." Harry recognised the voice of Madam Pomfrey. "How he, and three others, managed to get down into those chambers is beyond me. I'm not expecting him to be awake for at least another three to four days."

"He will be alright won't he?" Harry recognised the voice of Sirius. Sirius's voice had an edge of concern in it that Harry rarely heard.

"He should be." Madam Pomfrey said. "I managed to stabilise him. But that amount of magic should have him out for quite a while."

"Thank you Madam Pomfrey" Harry recognised the voice of Dumbledore again.

Harry heard footsteps walking away before hearing Albus and Sirius conversing again.

"Do you think he really will be out for that long?" Sirius asked Dumbledore.

"I've never known Madam Pomfrey to be wrong before." Dumbledore replied.

"Yeah but I love being the first to prove her wrong." Harry croaked out and Dumbledore and Sirius rushed over to his bedside.

"Harry! You alright?" Sirius asked him

"Will be once I can see." Harry groaned out and soon found his glasses being slid onto his face. The faces of Dumbledore and Sirius swam into view and Harry sat up so he could talk to them better.

"Don't do too much. Madam Pomfrey will have my guts for garters if you start over exercising." Dumbledore said.

Harry calmed down and looked around to see presents by his bedside. "Ah tokens from your friends and admirers." Dumbledore told him from looking at where Harry was staring. "What happened between you and Quirrell is a complete secret. So naturally the whole school knows. I believe Misters Fred and George Weasley tried sending you a toilet seat. Alas another blown up toilet for Filch to fix. But what can I say. That is what I pay him for. Anyway Madam Pomfrey thought it was unhygienic and confiscated it." Harry swore he saw the twinkle in Dumbledore's eye intensify suddenly before it calmed back down to normal.

"How long have I been in here?" Harry asked.

"Well that's the astonishing thing Harry." Dumbledore said. "Your exploits down below to stop Quirrell was only last night."

"So the quidditch cup final hasn't been played yet?" Harry asked with a broad hopeful grin on his face. It would be great if he could play in the last match.

"No Harry, that's tomorrow." Sirius said laughing uproariously. "Just like James. Always thinking of quidditch."

"I very much doubt Madam Pomfrey will let you play Harry." Dumbledore told him.

"But we have a chance to win the cup!" Harry said exasperated. "I'm awake and everything is fine!"

"EVERYTHING IS NOT FINE!" Madam Pomfrey's voice screeched out and Harry soon heard her rushing over. "How you are even awake I will never know," She swiftly turned to the two men that were subtly edging towards the entrance of the Hospital Wing, "You should have told me straight away," she chastised vehemently. After cowering the two men in before her, she turned to glare at Harry, "now lay back down Potter," she barked. Harry quickly obeyed, eager to avoid more trouble.

However, the mediwitch did not leave immediately. There was a curious pop, and Harry turned his head slightly to see what it was. To his horror, Madam Pomfrey was pouring a greenish-blue potion into a small cup.

"What's that?" Harry said.

"A potion to make you better." Pomfrey said.

"But I'm feeling okay!" Harry.

"That what you said down in the chamber Harry." Dumbledore pointed out. "Just before you fainted."

"Why did I faint?" Harry asked

"Magical Exhaustion." Pomfrey promptly replied as she gave the potion bottle a slight shake to remove the excess drops from the lip..

"What! That's impossible." Harry said "What really happened?"

"My boy." Dumbledore said "That is what happened. You used all of your magic up stopping Quirrell." Harry started to laugh but stopped when Pomfrey shoved the potion into Harry's hand.

"You were being serious?" Harry asked in disbelief as Pomfrey finally started walking away.

"Yes Harry." Dumbledore said.

"But I don't understand. I couldn't have used up that much magic." Harry mumbled.

"Maybe your magic isn't at full power yet because you haven't been using it much this year with your squib act." Sirius suggested, determined to add his own input. He turned away after a moment, embarrassed from the others' blank stares. Even he had no clue about what he said.

"That makes some sense," Harry finally said with a nod. "Come to think of it, it has been some time since I've meditated." Harry thought out loud.

"Meditating Harry?" Dumbledore asked. "How would that help?"

"Never mind." Harry said not paying attention to what Dumbledore asked him. He was too busy thinking. He really needed to get his



power back to where it should be. That escapade to save the stone shouldn't have used up all of his magical energy.

"So the stone isn't destroyed then?" Harry asked. "I mean I didn't get it out of the mirror this time. And I know neither Voldemort nor Quirrell knew how your test worked."

"Alas, it has been destroyed." Dumbledore said. "I talked to my good friend Nicholas and he and his wife thought it was best for it to be destroyed."

"But they will die then won't they?" Sirius asked.

"Yes but to a well organised mind..." Dumbledore started.

"...Death is but the next great adventure." Harry finished for him.

"I suppose you've heard that quite a lot then in the future?" Dumbledore said.

"Yeah, a bit." Harry absently agreed.

"So how are Ron, Hermione and Neville?" Harry asked.

"They are all fine." Sirius said. At Harry's pointed look, he clarified his statement, "They are worried about you but they are all fine nonetheless. There is a question I would like answered though, if it's okay.

"Sure." Harry agreed immediately.

"How is it that Quirrell couldn't touch you?" Sirius asked.

Harry smiled as he said the answer. "Mum." Sirius looked downright confused at this point. "My mum died to save me. Her love for me. It is one thing that Voldemort doesn't understand and the one thing that will be his downfall. Mum died trying to protect me, out of love. And she did just that. Her love runs through my blood. With that protection Voldemort can never touch me."

"Is that why erm... I'm not sure how to put this..." Sirius said.

"Is that why I stayed alive when everyone else died?" Harry asked for him. Sirius just nodded. "No. Voldemort bypassed that protection by using my blood in his resurrection spell at the end of the fourth year. I was just lucky that I managed to stay alive. Or unlucky if you want to see it from my point of view."

"You wished you died?" Sirius asked.

"No." Harry said and saw that both Dumbledore and Sirius were confused so he decided to explain. "If I had died then I wouldn't have had to see my family and loved ones die." "Especially Ginny," He added as an afterthought. He hesitated for a moment before continuing, "But then I wouldn't have managed to come back in time to try and stop it in the first place. So no I don't wish I died. But if I had maybe they wouldn't have had to go through that."

"They would have gone through it anyway Harry." Sirius said. "Voldemort wouldn't just leave them alone just because you died. And if you died then we would all be..."

"Doomed." Harry finished for him.

"I was going to go for dead. But yeah, that works too." Sirius replied.

"You're...right." Harry slowly said, as if he didn't quite believe it yet.

"See here Albus." Sirius said "I was right for once."

"Lucky you." Dumbledore replied. There was a moment of silence...then all three started laughing uproariously. Madam Pomfrey returned to see what the fuss was about.

"See here!" Pomfrey said. "I told you he needed rest."

"Yeah guys. I need all my energy for the quidditch game tomorrow." Harry said with a smirk.

"If you even think I'm going to let you play in that quidditch game you've got another thing coming." Madam Pomfrey threatened.

The world blurred before fading to black as the potion that the mediwitch had given him recently started to take effect. Harry's last

thoughts were anything but coherent, but they were something along the lines of, 'I feel fine...'

Harry woke up very early in the morning. The sun was just peeking over the horizon at the time. He groggily reached for his glasses which were on the bedside table. Putting them on, he looked at Madam Pomfrey's office and noticed that she wasn't around. He really didn't want to get caught doing this. Slowly, and ever so quietly, he crept out of bed and got dressed. Once he was dressed he gave another quick look at Madam Pomfrey's silent office and escaped the hospital wing. As soon as he was a couple of corridors away he called for Estelle.

"Harry, you're doing okay?" Estelle said.

"I'm fine!" He asserted, "Why does everyone keep asking me that?" Harry asked her.

"We're just worried." Estelle said. "What's up?"

"No one should be awake at this time." Harry said. "Take me to the Gryffindor common room. I need to get my quidditch gear."

"You're planning on playing today?" Estelle asked.

"Why else would I want my quidditch gear?" Harry said. "The rest of the team should be down in the great hall already." And with a flash, the two disappeared from the corridor.

Harry quietly snuck up the stairs to his dorm in order not to awake anybody. He quietly opened the door and fell back in surprise as Ron's snores, louder than his other dorm mates', suddenly assaulted his ears. So that was why no one else complained. Creeping in, he silently changed into his Quidditch uniform, grabbed his broomstick from one of his compartments in his trunk, and crept back down the stairs. By the time he reached the Great Hall, it was seven o'clock already. The sun was starting to shine brightly, but not many people were up.

Harry walked to where the rest of the team were sitting. Wood was halfway through giving them a team talk. Harry helped himself to some breakfast whilst listening to what Wood was saying.

Surprisingly, even though the large room was almost empty, no one actually noticed his arrival.

"... and I know we can do this, Harry or not. We can win this. It's beautiful weather outside, perfect for flying. We've got to keep them from scoring and score loads of goals. So let's do it for Harry," Before the team could cheer, Wood added another comment, "Although I'm so glad I don't have to put up with his sarcastic comments."

"Hey!" Harry said. "I could have done two sarcastic comments since I got here, but no I decided to restrain my self. If you're going to be like that I just won't bother."

It was rather funny how quickly all six quidditch players turned to look at him. "What you doing here Harry?" Wood asked, surprised.

"It's called eating. That's what you normally do at a breakfast table." Harry replied with a large grin, prompting a groan from the Griffindor captain.

"Okay I'm sorry about digging at your sarcastic comments." Wood apologised.

"Pardon? Couldn't hear you above the silence... could you repeat that?" Harry asked.

Wood scowled at Harry. "Harry..." he said warningly.

"It's beautiful weather don't you think. Compared to couple of weeks ago where you had us training in a thunderstorm." Harry said as he kept going, ignoring Wood's warning. "I seem to remember saying that the weather wouldn't be anything like what it was two weeks ago."

"Okay okay but can I please get back to the team talk?" Wood irritatedly asked.

"Depends. Do you want to bore us to death?" Harry replied. Wood just ignored him and went back to rallying the rest of the team. Harry leaned over to Fred, who was sitting next to him, and muttered. "I take that as a yes." Fred sniggered quietly. Harry tuned out Wood and started to stare around the Hall. It really was beautiful when it

was mostly empty. The house elves did a great job cleaning it up from last night. The tables sparkled, as the few rays of light streaming through the ceiling briefly touched the tables before fading away. Harry looked at the entrance and saw a glance of long red hair. Harry continued to look around when he realised that he didn't know anyone with long red hair at Hogwarts. His gaze returned to the entrance, but he didn't see anything out of the ordinary.

"Harry are you okay?" George asked from across the table.

"I think I'm going crazy." Harry replied.

"Going? I think it's too late for you to be thinking that, Harry." Fred said. Harry turned back to Fred and gave him an annoying look. "What? Are you the only one allowed to make sarcastic jokes?" Fred asked a fake look of hurt on his face.

"Yeah it's in my contract." Harry replied without missing a beat.

"Will you three pay attention!" Wood shouted at them "This is the quidditch cup final! Don't you care whether you win?"

"Of course Wood." Harry said. "Why do you think I snuck out of the hospital wing for!"

"Snuck...?" Wood said "You mean Madam Pomfrey doesn't know you're here?"

"I don't think I'd be here if she did." Harry replied. "Oh, and daisies please, everyone seems to like them."

"I don't think this is a good idea Harry." Wood said.

"I'm the one who will get into me. I'm fine. I can play." Harry he emphasized his last three sentences.

"Wood. You're not actually thinking of letting him play are you?" Katie questioned. The entire team looked sceptical.

"Come on I'll be fine." Harry said. "If Voldemort can't kill me then I doubt a game of quidditch will. And if Madam Pomfrey starts berating you I'll just say it was all Fred and George's idea. They are used to getting into trouble. And by the way, thanks for the toilet seat.

Shame Pomfrey confiscated it." Fred and George both burst out laughing at that comment.

"I don't know Harry." Wood said.

"Come on let him play." George said.

"Yeah what harm could it do?" Fred asked..

"Harry you sure you're okay?" Wood said.

"Can people please stop asking me that!" Harry nearly screamed out.

After more early risers entered the Great Hall, Wood decided that it was time to go down to the pitch. Everyone hesitantly stood up before shuffling out of the Great Hall. As Harry crossed through the entrance hall and started to exit through the front entrance he glanced back again, only to see a strand of long red hair disappearing behind the bottom of a staircase. He stared at that spot for a moment longer, as if expecting the owner to reappear.

"Harry will you keep up!" Wood shouted . Harry broke out of his trance and hurried over. Not so long after, Harry was changing yet again, ready to play some quidditch.

"Alright guys." Wood started off. "We haven't been in a quidditch cup final in years. This is our chance to finally prove who the better team is. So go out there and fly like I know you can. You do that and I know we can win."

"All for one and one for all." Fred shouted exuberantly.

"Catch your pants before they fall." Harry tacked on, and just then Fred's trousers undid themselves and full down to his ankles. Fred quickly grabbed them and pulled them back up amongst serious laughter from the team.

"That weren't funny Harry!" Fred said.

"Kids have no sense of humour these days." Harry said thinking aloud.

"Kids? You're a kid too you know." Fred said with a confused look. He wasn't the only one.

"I know, but I'm an odd duck." Harry replied sweating a little.

"Won't argue with you there." Fred grunted. Some still looked at Harry strangely, but the matter was over for now.

Once they had all settled down Wood went off on his usual pre match talk. Harry once again zoned him out. All he had to do was catch the snitch. As long as they won, even if it was by ten points they would win the cup.

"Alright, it's time." Wood said and the team marched out onto the quidditch pitch to Lee Jordan's voice.

"And welcome to the Quidditch Cup Final of Hogwarts between the two teams Gryffindor and Ravenclaw! Ravenclaw needs to lead by 120 points before catching the snitch to win the cup. Gryffindor, however, only needs to win by ten points. It'll be the first time in years!" He said, as if Gryffindor's chances for the cup were assured.

"Jordan!" Came another voice over the magical microphone. Professor McGonagall was starting rather early this game.

"And the Gryffindor team is as follows," Lee continued without missing a beat, "Wood, Johnson, Bell, Spinet, Weasley, Weasley and.... Potter? Potter is playing! Potter is out of the hospital wing and on the pitch! Potter is indeed playing. Sorry Ravensclaws but you better give up now.!"

"Jordan!" McGonagall's cried yet again. Twice in two minutes, Lee was on a roll.

"Erm Sorry Professor. Potter was recently in the hospital after the recent encounter with You-Know-Who. It was said that Harry wouldn't be able to play this match. However that is obviously being proven wrong." Jordon announced to the stunned crowd.

"Harry." Came Woods voice from next to him. "Catch the snitch as early as possible that's all you need to do." Harry turned to look at Wood as Madam Hooch released the quidditch balls.

"Captains shake hands." She said. Wood and the Ravenclaw captain shook hands and afterwards Madam Hooch took the whistle close to her mouth. "Mount your brooms please." Harry mounted his Nimbus two thousand and got ready to win Gryffindor the cup. "On the count of three. One, Two, Three. Madam Hooch's whistle blew and Harry soared up in the air higher and higher so he could scan the game for the snitch.

"And Gryffindors got the Quaffle, Bell in possession, passes to Johnson who immediately after passes it to Spinnet. And she's flying towards the goal hopes. Come on Alicia!" Alicia was just about to throw the Quaffle when she seemed to drop the Quaffle. The whole Gryffindor end moaned when all of a sudden Bell came flying underneath her and caught the Quaffle and threw it through one of the goal hoops which caught the Ravenclaw's by surprise.

"What an excellent move from Gryffindor." Jordan's voice called out. Harry watched as Gryffindor then went on a scoring spree, of 80-0. Harry's return to the team seemed to inspire everyone. Fred and George were slamming the bludgers into all of the right spots and soon Gryffindor had extended their lead to 120 -0. If Harry caught the snitch now, Gryffindor would set the record of the only quidditch team in Hogwarts history to have a shut out and also to win a game by most points.

"Ravenclaw in position, they're flying towards the Gryffindor goals." Jordon said and Harry turned to watch all three of their chasers closing in on Wood with no one anywhere close to them. The chaser in position faked a shot which caused Wood to go the wrong way. The chaser now passed it to another one of there chasers and he was just about to throw it into an empty goal post when a bludger slammed into the back of him causing him to drop it. "EXCELLENT BEATING FROM ONE OF THE WEASLEY TWINS" Jordon screamed out. "Spinnet in possession."

Harry continued to fly around the pitch closely looking for the snitch. Harry took one look at the crowd and his heart flew up into his throat. There in the stands, sitting next to Ron, Hermione, and Neville were Mr and Mrs Weasley, Sirius and Ginny. Harry continued to stare at Ginny, a smile forming across his face. Christmas seemed so far away now that he was seeing her once again. Ginny noticed that he was looking at her and slightly blushed



whilst waving at him. All of a sudden a bludger came soaring at him and he had to do a barrel roll in order to stop himself getting hit.

The bludger whiffed his robes before flying away. There was another whoosh as George followed it.

"Get your head in the game and catch that snitch!" George shouted as he soared past.

The field flickered into view as Harry immediately focused on finding the snitch again. There wasn't a speck of gold in sight. Undaunted, Harry had his broom float higher into the air to see more of the game. With lazy circles, he began searching for the snitch again.

In the meantime, Ravenclaw nearly scored twice more but an excellent save from Wood and another precision hit from one of the Weasley twins saw Ravenclaw miss both chances.

After a deft twist, an unnecessary move that was borne from a combination of boredom and desperation, he finally saw a glimmer near Gryffindor's goal posts. He shot straight down at it. At the same moment, Ravenclaw was just starting a three on one counter attack, having recovered the quaffle when a bludger crashed into Angelina's side, the pain forcing her to release the quaffle as she struggled to remain mounted with a single arm.

Harry urged his broomstick forward faster hoping to catch the snitch before they scored. Harry reached out his arm ready to grab the snitch when it suddenly shot upwards. Pulling hard on the handle, Harry immediately followed, ignoring the shouts, as he knowingly climbed into the path of a bludger.

He could have caught the snitch even if he slowed down a little. But he urged his broom to fly faster, taxing his breathing as a consequence. He planned to blaze past the point where the bludger and him would meet. He wanted the bludger to pass harmlessly under him.

He wasn't fast enough. With a thud, the bludger collided with the bristles of his broom and his Nimbus flailed wildly in response.

In that desperate moment, before he was thrown from his broom, his hand closed around the snitch. Soon afterwards, Harry heard Lee announce that Ravenclaw had scored. Then he started to free-fall.

The game froze as everyone watched Harry desperately grab for his Nimbus with his free hand before broom and rider fell from the sky. Some swore that Harry made a slight leap through the air. Others claimed that the broom recognized its owner's desperation and flew closer. Knowing Harry's skill in magic, many claimed that it was pure luck. Whatever the case, Harry managed to grab onto the handle of his broom.

After a brief struggle through the air, Harry finally managed to mount his broom and coast downwards. Crisis averted, the crowd cheered wildly.

Harry flew to the ground to see Madam Hooch in a talk with Wood and the Ravenclaw captain. Wondering what was going on he flew down to the ground where he was surrounded by his team mates. This time, when they asked if he was alright, Harry could only nod numbly.

Soon Wood joined them. "The goal didn't count. Hooch decided that the goal was scored just after Harry caught the snitch. We won 410-0. We won and with a shut out guys! First one in Hogwarts history!" The team cheered loudly. After everyone calmed down, they started heading for the changing rooms to continue the celebration in the Gryffindor common room. Harry felt a little light-headed as he walked over towards the changing rooms. He was just about to go in when he caught someone calling out his name.

"Harry!" Someone shouted as he turned and recognised Ginny racing towards him. She ran straight into him wrapping her arms around him screaming. "YOU WON YOU WON!" Then she punched him in the shoulder. "How could you worry me like that? I thought you were going to fall!"

Harry could only shrug helplessly before he smiled at her, "What are you doing here Ginny?"

"Came to see you of course." Ginny replied. "I thought it would be a good surprise after you surprised me at Christmas. Although I

weren't expecting you to play. People said you were unconscious in the hospital wing."

"I was." Harry said. "I woke up last night. You don't think anything could keep me away from the quidditch cup final do you?"

"Boys and quidditch." Ginny muttered.

"And who may I ask sneaks out in the middle of the night to practice flying her brother's broomstick." Harry teased her.

"How the hell do you know about that?" Ginny asked shocked.

Harry's jaw dropped when he heard that. While playful, Ginny was usually careful about presenting, what she thought was, her best side in his presence. It wasn't often he heard her curse. Recovering quickly, he was just about to answer when he heard footsteps and he looked up to see Neville, Ron and Hermione running towards them.

"Harry. You're awake!" Hermione screamed out.

"Umm, Hermione, how did you work that one out?" Neville asked. To which the mentioned girl responded with a huff.

"Harry you won! And you're awake! Why didn't you tell us?" Ron asked.

Harry smiled at them and realised he still had his arms around Ginny he gently let go of her, pretending that he was brushing a stray hair off of the redhead's shoulder. There was a knowing smile on Hermione's face though. Damn it! Harry thought.

"I didn't wake up till yesterday afternoon." Harry explained. "And that was just a little while before Madam Pomfrey gave me this horribly disgusting drink."

"And there was a reason for that Mr Potter!" Came Madam Pomfrey's voice. "How dare you sneak out like that! I was worried sick. Under no circumstances were you well enough to play in that game. Now come back to the hospital wing now!"

"But I'm fine!" Harry complained, conveniently forgetting about his light-headedness and the almost fall near the end of the game.

". "Oh?" The mediwitch walked up to Harry and started to examine him, much to his discomfort.

"What is the matter?" came the voice of Mrs Weasley. Harry turned to see Mrs Weasley, Mr Weasley Sirius and Dumbledore walking towards them.

"This boy needs to get to the hospital wing." Madam Pomfrey said as she stared into one of Harry's eyes..

"What happened?" Mr Weasley asked concerned.

"Nothing!" Harry responded with a placating smile as he looked away..

"Harry you better go to the hospital wing." Dumbledore said to him when Poppy frantically started casting diagnostic spells..

Before he could glare at Hogwart's Headmaster, Hogwart's mediwitch touched him lightly on the shoulder to get his attention. He looked at where her arm was pointing before sighing and trudging towards the Hogwart's Hospital wing.

"Don't worry Harry we'll come with you." Hermione said. The entire group trudged up to the hospital wing. Madam Pomfrey arrived last. Probably to make sure Harry didn't disappear again. She wasted little time in getting him changed and back into bed.

There was another pop. This time the potion was a deep purplish red.

"Oh no" Harry groaned which just caused Madam Pomfrey just to stare at him until he drank it. Once he drank it she went away leaving the others to sit around his bed. He happily noticed that Ginny was sitting the closet to him.

"So what really happened down in the chamber? The whole school is talking about it." Ron asked.

"Ron! Like he needs reminding of his encounter with You-Know-Who." Mrs Weasley said to him.

"It's alright Mrs Weasley. I can talk about it." Harry said. Harry shuffled around a little to get comfortable before he started to tell his side of the story. Hermione looked shocked when Harry described the way he greeted Quirrell.

"Facing immortal danger and he's still sarcastic." George said.

"He's quickly becoming our favourite brother." Fred said.

"Sorry Bill but you're history." George said immediately after, causing Harry to laugh. After that, it didn't take Harry long to finish his tale. Everyone was quiet as they contemplated the boy before him. Ginny, Harry noted with amusement, was looking at him in a new sense of awe.

"I'm still me Ginny." He whispered to her so noone could hear. "Please don't start thinking I'm some kind of super hero okay?" Ginny nodded and smiled back, but Harry was pretty certain she didn't quite understand yet.

"So the stone is gone then?" Ron finally said. "The Flamels are just going to die?"

"Yeah." Harry said. "But there's a saying. To the well organised mind death is just the next great adventure." No one had a reply to that.

"So how long do you have to stay in here?" Mrs Weasley asked.

"Haven't got a clue." Harry said. "Ask Madam Pomfrey."

"Until the end of year feast." Madam Pomfrey said coming over.

"But that's two days away!" Harry complained.

"You're lucky I'm letting you have visitors." She replied before setting a goblet before him.

"Another one?" Harry asked. "How many do I need?"

"Drink Potter." She said and Harry reluctantly forced it down his throat.

"Yuck." Harry moaned and Ginny giggled.

"You think this is funny?" Harry asked her.

"Just a little." Ginny replied.

"Just wait till I get out of here and back home. I'll come over and tickle you 'til kingdom come." Harry threatened her.

"Okay." She said "As I always win the tickle matches. I know your sensitive spots Mr Potter." Ginny smiled at him and then flushed deep red when she realised what she just said.

Harry just smiled; glad for once that he was Harry Potter.

Harry made his own way down to the feast, which didn't take him long because of Estelle. Harry managed to get to his seat without many people in the Great Hall noticing so there wasn't that much staring. The Great Hall was decorated with Gryffindor colours. Because of the quidditch cup and the fact that Harry and his friends didn't have four hundred points taken off Gryffindor, they didn't need the last minute points from Dumbledore to win the cup. Everyone was glad that the reign of Slytherin in both the Quidditch and the house cup had ended. Soon the Great Hall filled up. Ron, Hermione, and Neville were among the last few students to arrive.

"We went to get you from the hospital wing but Madam Pomfrey already said that you had already come down." Hermione explained.

"Yeah, I didn't want to walk in with everyone staring at me, so I came in when it was less crowded." Harry said with a nod.

Just then Dumbledore stood up and the Great Hall went quiet. "Another year gone." He said cheerfully. "And I must trouble you with an old man's wheezing waffle before we sink our teeth into our delicious feast. What a year it has been! Hopefully your heads are a little fuller than what they once were. But not to worry, you have all the summer to forget what you learnt and have them nice and empty for September." There were a few scattered chuckles at that.

"Now as I understand the house cup needs awarding. And the points stand as thus: In fourth place. Hufflepuff, with three hundred and fifty-two points. In third place Ravenclaw with four hundred and twenty-six points, Slytherin with four hundred and seventy-two points. And Gryffindor with five hundred and forty two points." Dumbledore called out. The Great Hall erupted in a loud noise as three tables celebrated the downfall of Slytherin.

"Yes, yes, well done, well done. But please bare with me as I have got last minute points to give out. It shouldn't take long." Dumbledore called out. The Great Hall went deadly quiet and slightly worried. However Harry knew who they were going to so he didn't have a care in the world. Although as they have already won the cup he didn't know why Dumbledore was giving them out.

"Firstly to Mr Ronald Weasley, for the best game of chess Hogwarts have ever seen in many years. Twenty points to Gryffindor." The great hall suddenly sighed in relief as they figured out what was going on. "Secondly to Ms Hermione Granger, for use of cool logic in the face of fire. I award twenty points to Gryffindor. Thirdly to one Mr Harry Potter. For pure outstanding nerve and courage. I award Gryffindor house Twenty-Five points. And lastly to Mr Neville Longbottom. Many people will say that Mr Longbottom didn't do much. For those out there saying this, please let me explain why your thinking is misguided. It is true that Neville didn't organise the chess game or manage to decipher a riddle or even fought Voldemort. However he did think of a way to help others. From devil's snare all the way up to Harry facing Voldemort he was supporting his friends to the bitter end. His courage, to go along with his friends even though he could have been expelled shows that he is a true Gryffindor. And I'm sure the Gryffindor house is glad to have him. It is where he belongs. Therefore I award ten points for bravery, to Mr Neville Longbottom."

Harry suddenly understood why he was giving them out. It wasn't the points that mattered. It was the recognition of what they had done. The recognition of how smart Hermione was. Or how clever Ron was when he tried. How much courage Harry had. For how brave and loyal Neville really can be. It wasn't the actions that Dumbledore was awarding the points for. It was the beliefs of each person that no matter how difficult something may look they did what they felt was right, not what they felt was easy.

Hermione was over the moon when the exam results came out. She was the top of the year. Harry managed a pass. But because of his act, in all practical magics, of failing twice before succeeding the third time, many weren't very high marks. Ron passed and Neville passed as well, alot better than Harry remembered from last time around. The last couple of days passed by quickly and soon their wardrobes were empty and trunks full. Notes were handed out as they walked out of the Great Hall and towards the boats to take them back across the lake telling them that no magic was to be used during the holidays. "I always hope they forget to give these out." Fred said as everyone boarded the Hogwarts Express. The group passed the time playing exploding snap and devouring candyas the Hogwarts Express took them across towns and countryside. As they neared London they all changed into their muggle clothes, and soon after, the train pulled into Platform Nine and Three Quarters.

Harry, Ron, Neville, and Hermione waited by the barrier as the guard next to it let the students through, a few at a time. At his signal, Ron and Hermione went first. Soon after, Harry and Neville followed, and they exited the platform to look for Neville's Gran and Harry's Godfather.

He had no forewarning. One minute, he was being pushed around by the busy crowd, the next Harry was fighting for his life as he was knocked to the ground and hugged by an enthusiastic redhead.

"Ginny you only saw me a couple of days ago." Harry said, returning the hug rather forcefully.

"I know but I still missed you." Ginny replied with a forced grin. She tried to tighten her hug, but Harry knew what to expect. Harry merely held his breath before tightening his own hold. The two broke down laughing soon after. "I can't wait 'til I come in September. Being at Hogwarts with you. It will be simply the best." Harry thoughts strayed to next year and the diary Ginny would receive from one Lucius Malfoy. He needed to make a decision about that. And very soon too. It would be a very difficult decision. He just hoped he made the right one. The rest of Ron's brothers came into view and soon they were sitting in the Ford Anglia riding their way back home, to the Burrow. Because no matter how much Potter Manor felt like home to Harry, the Burrow will always be at the top of his list.



A/N: Yahoo and the chapter is complete along with Harry's first year at Hogwarts. And we're off to year two and the chamber of secrets! What will Harry do? Let Ginny do it? Or protect Ginny from the diary? For those who don't know. I do have a yahoo group about this story were you might want to talk about the theory's of second year and the plotlines of this story. And other stuff. Hope you enjoyed. Yes this came out quite quick after my other one. To tell the truth I had this writing and sent of to my beta's even before chapter Sixteen was posted. That's for how quick I wrote it. But from now on don't expect the two weeks update. and expect to have to wait a while for the next chapter whilst I plan next year out. Yes I'm actually going to plan that year! I didn't really plan this one out. :P but next year I am so expect a little wait for next chapter.

## 11Disclaimer: I Do Not Own Harry Potter

Harry Potter finally gave up and sat up in bed. He really couldn't sleep, not with Ron's snoring.

The Weasleys had invited him to stay at the Burrow for the night, he accepted it without a second thought. The night stirred quietly as Harry silently crept out of bed and out of Ron's bedroom.

Since the beginning of Summer, whenever Harry stayed at the Burrow, he had been staying in Ron's bedroom . Before then, he used to sleep in Ginny's room because they were best mates. However with Ginny's growing crush on Harry, Mrs Weasley thought it best that Harry stayed in Ron's room from now on.

Harry crept along the corridor and past Ginny's bedroom. One quick look and he saw that the door was slightly open. With a light push, it opened enough for him to peer in. He looked in and saw Ginny's empty bed. Odd.

'Where could she be?' Harry thought for a moment before shrugging and heading downstairs into the kitchen. He pulled an empty glass from the cupboard and filled it up with water from the tap. On his first mouthful, Harry noticed that the door leading into the garden appeared to be unlocked. However, that wasn't the strange part. It was the swaying door itself that bothered him. Setting his nearly full glass down, he walked up to the door and pulled it open. A warm gust of wind greeted him as he observed the shadows dancing around the Burrow.

Seeing nothing amiss, Harry stepped out of the door and entered the garden. One quick glance at the quidditch paddock told him all that he needed to know. He also knew what to do. In a few quick strides, Harry was back in the kitchen, washing up his glass. Soon after, he was upstairs in Ron's room, silently swapping his nightclothes for something that would allow more freedom of movement. A few minutes later, Harry was slowly closing the back door. There was a small click and the door was secured. Once he was safely hidden behind a tree, he turned around and mentally called for Estelle.

"Any reason why you woke me up in the middle of the night?" Estelle asked him after her bright flash nearly left him blind.

"Of course! Can you go get my broomstick?" Harry asked her, blinking rapidly to remove the spots from his sight.

"It's the middle of the night Harry and you want to go flying now?" Estelle asked him.

"Yes." Harry said with a nod. Faster than he could say quidditch, Estelle was gone and back with his Nimbus. "You can stick around you know. Ginny will be about." Harry whispered just as Estelle prepared to disappear again.

"Why is Ginny up at this time? You... well, you're just weird... but Ginny?" Estelle said.

"You definitely know something needs to change when your own pets start mocking you." Harry muttered to her. Estelle just chuckled.

Harry got to the edge of the paddock and sat down to watch Ginny fly. She was really good, even at eleven. Well technically she was still ten because her birthday wasn't for another two weeks yet. Harry's was on Friday. Harry just sat and watched Ginny glide through the air for a long time. When Harry looked at his watch he noticed he had been out here for two hours. It was now one thirty in the morning, realizing this Harry looked up just in time to see Ginny lean forward and dive. He watched as she got closer and closer to the ground. At the point where even he would pull up, she kept going. His breath caught as Ginny pulled up a few feet from the ground. She was so close to crashing that her feet brushed the slightly damp grass, causing her to wobble slightly. She was off-balance, and before they both knew it, she had lost her grip. With a slight cry, she tumbled off her broom and landed on the grass with a soft omph. Harry was reflecting on how lucky she was, and how glad he was, that the fall wasn't that big as he let out his own breath. Then he heard her curse, and with a smirk and a shake of his head he saw his moment to step in.

"You kiss your mother with that mouth Ginny?" Harry called out to her, a smile crossing his face. Her head shot up and Ginny's sparkling brown eyes met Harry's.

"Harry! I erm, well.., I am..." she stammered.

"You're secretly flying one of your brothers' broomsticks in the middle of the night, aren't you?" Harry asked, emphasizing the second word, as he walked towards her. "You know you shouldn't be doing that Ginny." He reprimanded as Ginny hung her head. "You should be flying on my broomstick in the middle of the night. It's so much better than that thing and it will help you learn that move a lot easier."

Ginny's face shot up to look at Harry. "You're not going to tell?" Ginny asked looking quite shocked.

"Huh? We've been friends for years, Ginny, you know I wo-" Harry started to cluck out before Ginny enveloped him in a hug. Ginny just kept saying thank you over and over again while hugging him tight.

"Please stop saying thank you Ginny. You're giving me a headache." Harry said grabbing his head for added effect. Ginny chuckled and drew back. Harry handed his broom to her and Ginny shook her head in refusal.

"Harry, I can't." Ginny said staring at him with wide eyes.

"Why not?" Harry asked her. "You're my best friend. You can have a go on it whenever you want. Tell you what, When I'm here, I'll keep it in the shed with your brothers' broomsticks so that you can use whenever you sneak out here to fly."

"But what if I break it?" Ginny asked fearfully biting her lip and worrying at it.

"You won't break it." Harry said in an odd sort of voice as he lightly squeezed her shoulder; it was like a father reassuring his son. "I have complete trust in you." Ginny stopped staring fearfully at the broom to glare angrily at him.

"What?" Harry innocently asked knowing full well what he had done. He had treated her like a kid.

She stood there quivering and he had no idea why. Was it because of his joke or her reluctance? The smouldering fire in her eyes slowly died down, and then she spoke.

"Thank you...Harry." Ginny quietly accepted,.

Suddenly, she smirked, and the air around her seemed to heat up as something intangible seemed to light up the surrounding area. Harry couldn't help but feel afraid. And then...Thwack! She hit him. She bloody hit him! It wasn't a hard punch, but her message was clear. 'Treat me like that again and I'll get you for it, Potter,' he mentally translated.

Clutching his tingling arm, Harry looked up and answered with a smirk of his own. He looked forward to the next time. This wasn't the first time he'd done it, and it was one of the few threats that Ginny failed to carry through.

He heard her snicker faintly, and then there was no holding back. He started to laugh, and Ginny followed soon after.

A loud crash nearby broke their laughing fit. Scared, the two hurried behind a nearby tree where they waited with baited breath. The two released their breath with an audible whoosh when nobody followed.

The mood broken, Harry restarted the conversation. "Ginny?" He asked to catch her attention, "If you don't mind, could I come and watch whenever you sneak out?" Harry said. "I can give you tips if you want."

"You really weren't joking about the broom?" Ginny asked.

"Of course not Ginny." Harry said gently to her. "If you ever need anything just ask me okay. As long as it's not too big I'll try and do it for you."

"Why?" Ginny asked again.

"Cause you're my best friend." Harry replied, confused at where this was coming from.

"I'm still your best friend then?" Ginny asked, she quickly covered her mouth afterwards and looked away.

That's what was bothering her! Harry gaped at her for a moment before he noticed her glancing secretly at him. He realized that even if she hadn't meant to ask the question, she still wanted an answer.

So he confidently gave her one, "I just said that didn't I? Twice I think. What makes you think your not my best friend anymore?"

"You've been away at Hogwarts all last year and you've made new friends," Hermione and Ron came to his mind as Ginny said this. "You're also a lot closer to Ron..." she continued.

A short loud bark ripped through the air, causing Ginny to look up shocked. She saw green eyes that seemed to glow from fury. "Ginny...how many times do I have to tell you I am not ever going to forget you? How many! Never! I didn't last year when I was at Hogwarts. Now that you're going this year how can I possibly forget you," he paused and drew in a deep breath. "I'm Not Going To Forget You," he rapidly said, emphasizing each word as he said it.

"Really?" Ginny said, the lilt of hope in her voice annoyed him.

"YES!" Harry nearly shouted. It still came out harshly but he managed to keep some of the bite out of his words. He held his broom out to her, "now stop asking me about it and start flying!"

"S-sorry Harry." Ginny stammered and she hurriedly grabbed his broom and started mounting it.

"Ginny wait." Harry said hurriedly before she flew off. "I-I didn't mean to get mad at you okay. I just get angry every time you think that our friendship will end if we don't see each other everyday. I'm not friends with you because it's convenient. I'm friends with you because I want to be friends with you, and it hurts when you think otherwise."

"But I don't." Ginny said distraught. "I didn't mean it like that..."

Harry didn't give her a chance to defend herself. Instead, he grabbed her into a friendly hug and squeezed tightly. "Please, Ginny, stop worrying about it." Harry quietly said to her. He let go, leaned back, and gave her a light push, "Fly."

Ginny stood motionless for a moment. There was a clatter as Harry's broom fell to the ground, unsupported. Throwing her arms around him she returned his hug with a brief one of her own. Pulling back and blushing just a little Ginny picked up his broom and mounted it.

With a smile and an expectant look telling him to stay put, she pushed off the ground.

She slowly went around the paddock once, getting used to the broom. Then, like a fish leaping out of water, she had the broom rocket high into the air before she pushed it forward and started to a dive. It was a breathtaking sight, he had to squint as the bright moonlight haloed her figure against a cloudless sky. Her dive continued, and Harry could finally see the concentration on her face as she started to pull up.

Thud!

The tail of the Nimbus wasn't supposed to hit the ground for this move. But it did and Ginny found herself off the broom and on the grass again. Harry scrambled as fast as he could over to her.

"Ginny you alright?" Harry asked her hurriedly as he came to a skidding halt next to her.

"Yeah just, it's a little different from my brothers' brooms." Ginny dazedly replied. "I didn't break it did I?" Ginny asked, all worried now.

"Of course not. Its taken more of a battering in quidditch practices last year than that. Don't worry about it." Harry said as he scanned her to make sure she really was alright. Ginny closed her eyes and leaned against Harry.

"I'm just going to have a little break okay?" Ginny said yawning.

"Come on. Let's put the broomstick away and get back to bed. If you fall asleep out here it will be me carrying you back up to your room. And I don't particularly want to do that," Ginny regarded him curiously when he said this. She knew that he was baiting her. He chuckled good naturedly when she didn't bite and continued, "You know...I could leave you out here," he weathered the glare that suddenly adorned her face without a flinch, "But then your mum might find out when she leaves the Burrow to feed the chickens in the morning. C'mon then." Harry said as he gave her arm a slight tug, prodding her to stand. Ginny stubbornly remained on the ground.

"Can't I have one more go." Ginny complained very tiredly, yawning whilst she was at it.

"Ginny, you're tired. I'm tired. It's two o'clock in the morning. Wait till tomorrow night, then you can have another go." Harry said.

"Really?" Ginny asked sleepily. Her eyes widened slightly, "I'm sorry."

Harry chuckled, "If you want to. Now let's go to bed." Harry said helping her up from the warm ground. Ginny leant against Harry as he helped her back to her bedroom. As they stopped at her door Harry turned to look at her.

"Night Harry." Ginny mumbled out before sleepily walking into her bedroom and closing the door with a soft click.

"Night Gin." Harry whispered as he softly laid his hand on the door. With a sigh Harry turned and walked back to the bedroom he shared with Ron. He needed to do some thinking about this year, and more importantly, the Chamber of Secrets. 'What to do,' was prying on Harry's mind all summer so far.

On one hand he could let Ginny do it. The Chamber of Secrets fiasco made Ginny the woman she grew up to be. The woman Harry fell in love with the first time. Also Harry wanted Ginny to love him. In the future, she told him that his heroism down in the Chamber of Secrets is what changed her crush to love. If he didn't let the Chamber events happen, there was a chance that Ginny's crush would never become love. He couldn't think of a future where Ginny didn't fall in love with him. For Merlin's sake they were married.

Then again, what would happen when he told her about being from the future? She wouldn't be happy when she discovers that Harry knew about the Chamber Of Secrets.

He had to make an important decision. Which situation would he prefer: Ginny discovering the fact that Harry knew about the Chamber Of Secrets? Or Ginny married to him but without the love that was crucial to a happy marriage. She was going to be mad either way, but which evil would he prefer? To be selfish and let her do it so she would fall in love with him? But is that really selfish? To want your wife to love you? For Ginny to be married to someone she loved rather than married to someone she may never love. To either be married to someone she loved and have a happy future together,



or to be stuck in a loveless marriage for the rest of her life. Harry knew the decision he would make would affect the relationship between him and Ginny. He just prayed to Merlin that he would make the right one.

oOoOo

The next three nights Harry stayed at Potter Manor so he couldn't go watch Ginny.

On the fourth night, the thirtieth, Harry again stayed at the Burrow, ready for his birthday the next day. Harry was also awaiting Dobby's visit. Under no circumstances would Harry agree with Dobby's demand to stay away from Hogwarts. He didn't know it back then, but Dobby was trying to make a magical contract with him so he wouldn't be able to go back to Hogwarts. He didn't accept it then, and he wasn't going to let Dobby trick him into accepting it now.

Eleven o'clock came around before Harry thought it was safe to go downstairs. He left the snores of Ron in their bedroom and crept along the hallway to the stairs. When he crept past Ginny's bedroom door Harry noticed it was still shut. Was Ginny staying in tonight? Harry wondered and was just about to go back to bed when the door opened. Ginny came walking out and not looking at where she was going, crashed headlong into him.

Ginny suddenly opened her mouth, but Harry quickly placed his hand over her mouth, muffling her screams. Not wasting not a moment, he began awkwardly dragging her towards the stairs. He hesitated before dragging her down the stairs, silently praying that the creaks and groans of the stairs as well as the thumps of Ginny's kicking feet weren't heard by the rest of the family. At the bottom of the stairs, Ginny had calmed to the point where she stopped kicking uselessly. Instead, she kicked the one of the last stairs furiously demolishing her captor's balance. Tipping precariously, Harry fell and tumbled down the last few steps. Without someone to hold her up, Ginny succumbed to gravity and landed on him soon after.

It took a minute but the redhead finally recovered enough to push herself up. "Harry?" Ginny whispered out. "You prat!" Ginny slapped him across the back as she got off of him. "What are you trying to do give me a heart attack? I thought you were a burglar."

"Sorry Gin." Harry moaned out. "Didn't want you screaming and waking up the whole house." He winced as she jabbed him viciously with a finger.

"Are you okay? Does this HURT?"

"O-of course n-not," he hissed. It did actually, but he wisely chose not to say anything.

"You're fine then, you big baby. C'mon get up." She said with an innocent smile. She left his prone body and stood up at the foot of the stairs. Then she crouched in front of the Boy-Who-Lived who almost died from falling down the stairs and being flattened by a heavy girl. "What are you doing up anyway?"

"I wanted to watch you fly tonight, maybe offer you a tip or two." came the reply from the prone boy as he laid face down.

The smile faded from her face, "Oh." She grasped his arm and struggled to haul him up, "C'mon, up you go. Can't have you lying here all night."

Once Harry was up, and they were both outside, Ginny broke the silence, "Harry? Could you show me how to do that barrel roll you do to avoid the bludgers?"

"If you want. But I suggest you get used to the Nimbus first" Harry told her and Ginny eagerly nodded. She didn't run immediately to the shed to pick up his broomstick, however, and the two stood there in silence.

"So it's your birthday tomorrow...expecting anything?" Ginny asked him.

"I don't have a clue." Harry answered her. "At least the party ain't a surprise this time."

"Yeah I kind of thought that you would guess a surprise party so I didn't plan anything like that." Ginny told him.

"When did you become queen of organising my birthdays." Harry said with a teasing smile.

"Since I'm your best friend and know everything about you." Ginny replied. Harry sagged a little when she said she knew everything about him. Truthfully she didn't. But it wouldn't stay that way forever. He would eventually tell her. He had to.

When they reached the shed Ginny took a hair clip out of her hair and starting picking the lock.

"You know how to pick the lock?" Harry asked more than slightly amazed.

"Sure, how else did you think I managed to get in here? Your broom is hidden in the back, right?" Ginny asked.

"I thought you used your mother's wand." Harry said confused while nodding his head.

"Why would you think that? I've never used my mother's wand before." Ginny said. "And that also reminds me. You knew about this. I mean before last night. I remember you mentioning it at the quidditch final. How did you know about this?" Ginny mentioned as she was picking the lock.

"Me, oh well, I err..." Harry mumbled out. There was a click, as the shed's door was unlocked.

"I'm waiting for an answer Harry." Ginny said as she turned around and stood before him with her hands on her hips. She had and a stern look on her face.

"I guessed?" Harry suggested as an excuse.

"You're keeping secrets from me?" Ginny said in a hurt voice.

"What? No." Harry said a little too fast.

"Fine don't tell me." Ginny sighed. She took the hairclip out of the lock and opened the door.

"It's not like I like keeping secrets from you." Harry told her.

"So there are secrets." Ginny said as she stopped and turned to look at Harry. "Will I ever get to know them?"

"I promise you Ginny." Harry said now looking fiercely into her eyes. "When the time is right you will know."

"No chance you're hiding a big burning passion for little old moi is there?" she joked as she grabbed Harry's broomstick out of the shed and started walking towards the paddock. There was no reply. She kept her back to him to hide her downcast expression.

Harry was so shocked at her question that he just didn't know what to say. The past year she had been a little shy around him, now she was acting almost like the confident girl that he had befriended during childhood.

"What's up Ginny?" Harry asked her.

Ginny frowned at the question. "Sky of course." she sarcastically said. "What are you talking about?"

"The way you're acting. You're not all blushing and you're actually, god forbid, acting normal again." Harry said. "You've gotten over me?" Harry couldn't stop the hurt from showing in his voice as they started walking towards the paddock.

"Why do you care? It's not like you return my feelings for you." Ginny said.

"Return..." Harry said "you said return."

"And that means what Harry?" Ginny said as she climbed over the fence that surrounded the paddock.

"You said return instead of returned." Harry told her with a cocky grin. "Present tense. That means you still like me. I guess I really am unforgettable."

Ginny sighed. "Why do I have to fancy a damn smart-aleck who is actually smart?" Harry sniggered at that and Ginny hit him in the arm. "Fine, I...I," she wanted to say something but the words wouldn't come out. Her face reddened in anger, "I like you, okay!" A sullen expression then passed over her face, "I just missed having fun with you because I got all shy around you and it stopped us from hanging

out. I missed you that's all. So I decided that no matter what I feel for you and what I hope may happen between us, I will always be happy because I have your friendship."

"You will always have my friendship if you want it. No matter what happens." Harry promised.

"Thanks." Ginny said with a small hopeful grin. "Right so you're going to teach me some moves then?"

Harry nodded.

For the next couple of hours, Harry taught Ginny a few of his quidditch tricks. Soon after Ginny managed a Sloth-Grip Roll, they were both up in the air, Ginny struggling to stay away as Harry chased her with Ron's broomstick. It wasn't hard, the Nimbus was just that much better, but Ginny was supposed to use the moves that Harry was teaching her to escape.

Come one-thirty Harry and Ginny flew down to rest. "That was great," Ginny exclaimed. "You're a really good teacher Harry."

"Yeah I think so too." Harry joked.

"Big headed." Ginny muttered. "So you had fun?"

"Yeah, I had a lot of fun. I mean its flying." Harry explained. "I just love flying. No matter how or where I just love flying."

"Yeah I know what you mean. I just wish my brothers would let me play. I know you always want me to play but the others refused. I don't mind really. I have better stuff to do." Ginny said shrugging.

"Better than quidditch?" Harry asked shocked. "What's better than quidditch?"

"Boys." Ginny muttered.

"Girls." Harry muttered loud enough for Ginny to hear him.

"I heard that Mr Potter." Ginny said.

"And what are you going to do about it?" Harry said.

Harry saw a flash of mirth in Ginny's eyes and he knew instantly that he was in trouble. "I seem to remember when I came to Hogwarts that you promised me a tickling match." Ginny sang. Harry instantly shot up with wide eyes and started to run with Ginny chasing after him.

"I'll find you, you know." Ginny shouted running after him. However, Harry was very quick and ran into the woods to hide. After ten minutes, when Ginny still hadn't found him, he cautiously walked back to the paddock, keeping an eye out just in case Ginny jumped out from behind a tree.

At the paddock he noticed that the kitchen light was on. Very curious about what was going on he crept up to the kitchen door and peeked inside. Ginny was at the table with a stubborn expression on her face as Mr and Mrs Weasley were standing over her.

"I don't know what you were thinking young lady. Riding a broomstick in the middle of the night. And on top of that you were riding Harry's broomstick. What do you think he will say when he finds out his best friend has been breaking into the shed and stealing his broomstick to sneak out in the middle of the night and practice quidditch?" Mrs Weasley rattled on and Ginny just stayed quiet, tears starting to roll down her cheeks. "I would expect this of Fred and George but not you Ginevra. What do you think Harry will say when he hears you've been stealing from him?"

"Good job, keep it up?" Harry said from the door and Ginny looked up and smiled at him. Mrs Weasley frowned at that. For Arthur, a delighted expression overcame his face.

"Good evening Harry." Mr Weasley said. "What are you two up to at this late hour?"

"That question is easy. Ginny and I are practising Quidditch." Harry replied.

"Do Not Take That Tone With Me Harry Potter." Mrs Weasley hissed out.

"Sorry mum." Harry mumbled, hoping the use of mum would calm her down. "Ginny sneaks out at night and practices quidditch 'cause

her brothers won't let her play during the day and she knew that you wouldn't like her playing quidditch. If it's any conciliation she's really good. Picked up the moves brilliantly tonight. If she ever tries out for the team she'll get on it for sure."

"Just because she's good doesn't give her the right to be out of bed at two o'clock in the morning running about the garden." Mrs Weasley said "I don't know what I'm going to do. Don't think I'm letting you off the hook Harry." Mrs Weasley said while shaking her finger at him. "I'm grateful that you called me mum, but it won't save you from punishment, neither you nor Ginny. Oh, what am I going to do?" Mrs Weasley burst out while raising her hands in a helpless gesture.

"Maybe Ginny can escape punishment as a birthday present?" Harry asked hopefully "Like I said it's my fault really that she has to do this. Her brothers refuse to let her play during the day and I haven't tried hard enough to change their minds. But please just let her off this once. For my birthday?"

"It's late, we will talk about this tomorrow. Now both of you go to bed." Mr Weasley said gently, putting a hand on Mrs Weasley's shoulder and guiding her back to the master bedroom before she had a chance to continue. Harry and Ginny slowly crept up the stairs in silence. On the third floor, Ginny turned around and gave Harry a huge hug.

"Thank you for trying to get me out of trouble." Ginny said. "You didn't have to though; I could have handled it myself."

"I know that Ginny." Harry as he stood there surprised. He slowly closed his arms around her and gave a slight squeeze. "That's why I had to tell her about myself as well. How could I let you get into trouble without me? Huh? We were doing it together so we should be punished together. I'm not going to leave you behind."

Ginny broke the hug and smiled at him. "You're a good friend, you know that right Harry? I know I can always trust you. I don't know why, but no matter what you will always do what's best for me and not what's best for yourself. Thank you." With that she shut the door to her room and Harry walked up to his room with Ron.

'Yeah.' Harry thought as he got into bed. 'I always do what's best for Ginny. But what is best for Ginny? To let her experience the Chamber Of Secrets and fall in love so she isn't in a loveless marriage? Or take the diary away from her and have a normal year. But then she will be married to someone she may never love.' Harry's thought patterns continued like this until he went into an uneasy sleep. Worried about next year. And what the future might hold.

A/N: hey guys and another chapter for you. Hopefully that this is three in one week if mark can get it back. Talk to you later. P.S as you can see Ginny is starting to get suspicious and Harry is starting to think about next year. What do you think will happen with that? Anyway I'm off to write next chapter have fun reading.



Disclaimer: I Do Not Own Harry Potter.

Harry opened his eyes on the morning of his twelfth birthday, he closed them soon after, hoping that a few more minutes would help him feel better. 'Staying up late wasn't a good thing.' Harry grumbled as a small voice, insisting that he wake up, kept him from sleeping a few more minutes. After a brief struggle, he sat up and cast a weary glance at Ron's empty bed. 'Man, I must have slept longer than I thought. Ron's never up before me.' He groaned.

With a grunt, he left Ron's room and stumbled down a floor, where he entered a dark empty room and shut the door. For several minutes, the sound of running water was clearly heard from outside of the closed door. Then, with a squeak, it disappeared and the door opened again. A slightly refreshed Harry, with clean clothes, left the washroom and started walking downstairs

Trudging slowly down the stair Harry stopped on the landing in front of Ginny's door noticing it was still closed. 'I guess she's still asleep from last night.' 'He let out a large yawn before continuing downstairs. Walking into the kitchen, he was greeted to the sight of everyone, apart from Ginny and Molly, wide awake and conversing loudly.

"Morning." Harry said groggily as he sat down in one of the two free seats.

"Call off the Aurors! Our missing person has been found!" Someone exclaimed from in front of the sink. It was Sirius with a large grin on his face.

"Huh?"

"Right when the sun is setting, eh?" came a voice from his left. It was one of the twins that said this as he stared out of the brightly lit kitchen window.

"I do believe you're right, George old buddy," the other twin agreed as he also turned to stare outside.

Confused, Harry looked outside before turning to look at a timepiece on the wall.

"Knock it off you three, it's only 10:30," he grumbled softly, glaring at them to increase the bite.

"Only? Only? Merlin Harry, I think this is the first time we haven't seen you awake before seven." Sirius pointed out as he turned his attention back to the object in his hand. "Those that are half-awake enough to notice, anyway," he added after a moment's pause. "How anyone can be that chipper before noon, I'll never know." Sirius mumbled as he set another plate aside to dry.

Harry had to bite back a chuckle. His godfather was at the sink washing the dishes by hand. "Only ladies use wands," he had heard Sirius say from time to time. After which, to the amusement of everyone, Sirius would take out his wand and charm the dishes to dance in a never-ending bath of soapy water. Needless to say, it was a riot to watch Sirius wash the dishes.

That is, until Sirius waved his wand and conjured water balloons to wash everything. Absolutely everything! The dishes were clean, and so was anything else caught in the crossfire. One time he had managed to catch Ginny in the deluge, she pushed the grown man into the sink and turned the faucet on to full force, showering his head with cold water.

"You're on washing up duty?" Harry asked completely ignoring his godfathers rant.

"No, Ginny is apparently." Sirius replied. "But she isn't up yet either." Just as the words left his mouth, Mrs Weasley came bustling through the door that lead out into the garden.

"Ah Harry you're awake." Mrs Weasley said smiling fondly at him. Looking around the Kitchen she then inquired. "Is Ginny up too?"

"Err... no, I don't think so." Harry replied.

"Well I'd better go wake her up. She can't miss any more of your birthday, now can she?" Mrs Weasley said, heading towards the stairs.

"It's alright she can sleep some more if she's tired..." Harry started before being cut off.

"Nonsense. It's late and she needs to be getting up now anyway." Mrs Weasley said before continuing to head up the stairs.

Something in Mrs Weasley voice said that no matter how tired Ginny was, she was going to get up and be forced to stay awake. Five minutes later a disjointed thumping could be heard coming down the stairs followed by a bleary eyed Ginny and a grumpy Mrs Weasley.

Ginny automatically turned towards the sink to start washing up. But Harry had seized her arm before she had a chance to walk over. With a light tug, he quickly led her outside before Mrs Weasley could say anything. A shout of dismay from Sirius followed them out before the door closed behind them.

"Harry?" Ginny said shocked, finally waking enough to register her surroundings.

"Do you really want to do the washing up?" Harry asked her as he continued to hurriedly pull her away from the back door.

"Well no..." Ginny muttered.

"Then don't moan." Harry replied, dragging her toward the creek that was in the wood next to the Burrow. Once they had arrived on the section of the bank that they thought of as their spot they flopped down on grassy the bank. Leaning against the big willow tree that hung out across the creek they sat laughing and talking about nothing and everything for a little while. During a lull in the conversation Ginny realised that she hadn't yet wished Harry a happy birthday.

"Oh, by the way, Happy birthday Harry." Ginny said as a large grin overtook her face. She playfully cuffed him on the arm.

Ouch. Thanks." Harry said before ruffling her hair in revenge..

"You know? I'm surprised you're not rushing back to open up your presents." Ginny told him as she finally batted his hands away and protectively covered her head with her arms..

"So you want me to choose presents over you, Ginny?." Harry asked. "Well, okay, if that's how you feel," he continued, oblivious to her open-mouthed expression.

"No, you prat!" Ginny defended.

"What are you mad at me for?" Harry asked mock-innocently.

"I'm not!"

"Yes you are. Look." He poked her cheek. It was puffed out in annoyance.

Unable to defend against that accusation, the redhead let out a huff and turned away.

Afraid that his sides might burst if he tried to hold out any longer, Harry burst out laughing. "Okay, okay. It's my birthday." He said it as if it was the answer to everything. It sort of worked; his companion lost some of her tenseness. "Let's head back. By the time we get there the washing up will be done and I can open up my presents. It's already eleven, we'd better hurry or we'll have to start running for France. I don't think Sirius will remain calm for much longer with those unopened presents sitting in front of him." Harry felt a cold chill as he thought of how fanatical Sirius became when it came to presents.

"Let's not forget Ron. He must be frantically searching for us by now," Ginny pointed out. The two shared a laugh at that. She sucked in a quick breath before continuing, "Those two can never wait to open presents. Heck they might be working together to organise a search party already." Ginny said laughing; she couldn't help but be amazed by the fondness for presents those two boys had. Eventually both Harry and Ginny calmed and all that could be heard was the rushing of the creek before Ginny finally broke the silence. "You didn't have to wait for me you know." Ginny said as she stood up and brushed her jeans off.

"What do you mean?" Harry asked, looking up at her clearly confused.

"To open your presents. You didn't have to wait for me to get up to open your present. I wouldn't have minded you know." Ginny said.

"I still don't get what you mean." Harry said standing and following Ginny as she started back towards the house.

"You waited for me to get up." Ginny said, like it was the most obvious thing.

"Yeah, I waited for all of like five minutes." Harry said, chuckling.

"You're telling me that you only got up five minutes before me?" Ginny said, now confused. "But mum made it sound like you had been waiting hours. She was going on and on about how you were waiting for me and that it was late and how a good friend would have been up by now, not sleeping late into the day."

"Yeah, I thought she might make it sound worse than it actually was." Harry said, thinking. "I think that because I asked her not to punish you until after my birthday she's trying to find something that will feel like a punishment. Either that or punish you for something that you haven't really done. Which is kind of unfair, but then again she didn't tell your brothers anything about last night. Which is a good thing, at least I think it is."

"Oh... so you're not upset that I slept in late then." Ginny said looking at him hopefully.

"No Gin. But even if I did wake up a long time before you, I wouldn't have minded." Harry said smiling back at her.

"Well, umm thanks... come on, let's go open your presents." Ginny said rushing through the open door of the kitchen and then into the living room where Harry's presents were piled up.

"So you've finally come to open your presents huh? Took ya long enough don't ya think?" Sirius said as Harry entered the living room and sat down next to Ginny on the sofa.

"Yeah. Thought it might be fun, you know?" Harry said jokingly. Looking away from his godfather Harry scanned the room and noticed that Remus, and Neville had arrived whilst he and Ginny were outside.

"Nev Mate!" Harry called out to the slightly older boy when he noticed him.

"Alright Harry?" Neville asked. "Thanks for the book on plants you sent me for my birthday yesterday. It was great."

"Really... well I'm glad ya liked it. I didn't know what to get you. Thought a book on plants was a safe bet." Harry replied while shrugging feeling quite relieved that Neville had liked his gift.

"So are you going to open your presents or what?" Sirius asked a little impatiently.

"Is it normal for the parent, or guardian in this case, to be more excited about the birthday presents than the actually kid?" Harry asked Sirius as he pulled Ron's present over to him.

"Would you rather not have the presents?" Sirius said offhandedly leaning forward and eyeing the box in Harry's hand.

"No, no. Back off sparky." Harry said pulling the present into his chest while glaring at his guardian and causing everyone to laugh. Sirius leaned back smirking as Harry slowly unwrapped the present continuing to keep an eye on him to make sure none of his presents disappeared. As the last of the paper was removed Harry made a final glance at Sirius checking to be sure he hadn't nicked any of the presents. Satisfied that all the presents were still accounted for Harry opened the box to find a bright orange Chudley Cannons t-shirt.

"Thanks Ron." Harry said smiling at him. Really, it was okay. Harry didn't expect anything different from Ron. While the Cannons may not be his favourite team Ron was forever trying to convert him and he was ok with that. Harry realised that they may never be his favourite team but they would defiantly stay Ron's. And just the knowledge that Ron wanted them to have the same favourite team made Harry happy.

After setting the t-shirt aside Harry turned back to the pile of presents to open the one from Neville. He slowly ripped off the wrapping paper to reveal a book on quidditch. The gold lettering of the title reflected the light coming in from the window and Harry had to squint a little as he read it. '100 of the Greatest Quidditch Moves Ever Performed; and How to Use them to Defeat Your Opponent'. Slowly, he flipped through the book glancing at the moving diagrams on almost every page.

"Neville mate this is great. I can defiantly use some of these in our games." He told him as he had stopped flipping through it to read up on a rather dangerous looking manoeuvre. At one stage of the move the player only had his foot hanging onto the broomstick while the rest of him dangled below.

Ginny looked over his shoulder and started to read the page as well. Harry leaned back and whispered into her ear so her brothers couldn't hear. "I'll let you read it so you can practice after I've read it, Gin." The look on Ginny's face was the best present he could have gotten; it made him so happy that he didn't really care what the other presents were.

Leaving Ginny's present till last like he always did, he slowly turned towards Hermione's present. As he felt it he immediately knew it was a book. Although, he shouldn't have had to touch it to guess that. Slowly he unwrapped the bright muggle wrapping paper it to reveal Hogwarts: A History. Harry chuckled and made a mental note to owl her a thank you. He remembered in the future how many times Hermione had asked Ron and himself whether they were ever going to read it. Harry flipped through the pages quickly before putting it back down with the other book he got from Neville and turned to the next present. It was from Percy. Unwrapping it he could see that yet again it was another book!

"Is someone trying to tell me I need to do some more reading?" Harry said, causing everyone to chuckle. He looked back down at the cover to see that it was a copy of The Prefect's Handbook. As he flipped through the pages he noticed that it had all the rules and regulations of Hogwarts and the School Board's directives. He also notice quite a few passages were highlighted, as if pointing out where he needed to improve. "Err thanks Percy, that's great." Harry said putting it next to the other books, knowing far too well that he would never actually read it, and that he better hide it from Hermione lest she read it.

The next present on the pile turned out to be Bill's. Harry unwrapped it to discover a small replica of an amulet.

"It's a protection amulet. Just a small one. Not very powerful one mind ya. But after the end of last year I thought you could do with one." Bill said explaining. Like last year, he and Charlie had come to

the Burrow for his birthday. Smiling he thanked Bill and moved onto Charlie's present.

He opened up the colourfully wrapped package to reveal a t-shirt. Picking it up to show everyone Harry took in the design on the shirt. On the front was a dragon moving about, a Hungarian Horntail he noticed, with fire coming out of its nose. Above the prowling dragon were a few words wreathed in flames: 'Been there, Done that, And I got the burns to prove it.' Harry laughed out loud, thanking Charlie for the shirt and telling him he thought it was absolutely brilliant before moving onto Fred and George's present. As usual with all the stuff that Harry got from them he used extreme caution whilst moving it towards him.

"Now Fred." George said. "Did we give him something dangerous last year?"

"Absolutely not George." Fred answered with a look of mock offence. "Do you have any idea why Harry would think we would give him something dangerous this year George?"

"Absolutely not Fred." George said, smiling at Harry.

"That's enough you two." Mrs. Weasley scolded. "Go on and open it up, Harry dear."

Harry slowly unwrapped the present, sitting on the edge of the couch ready to bolt at a moment's notice. He never trusted the twins when it came to this. What he got, however, Harry wasn't sure. The wrapping paper opened to reveal an empty box with a lid. Near the top edge of the lid there was a slit big enough to put pieces of parchment through. Harry was thoroughly confused and look at the twins with one eyebrow cocked. "Now last year's present looked like a plain bit of parchment and it wasn't. So I'm not really going to believe this is a plain box with a slit at the top."

"You're right Harry." George said grinning from ear to ear.

"This, my friend." Fred continued.

"Is you very own..." George said.

"Personal..." Fred added.



"Automated Essay Writer." Fred and George said together. Both looking like the cat that ate the canary.

"All you need to do." Fed explained.

"Is get a plain piece of parchment like this and write the essay question on it." George continued, showing the piece of paper to Harry.

"For this demonstration we've added our own question. 'Write a detailed essay on the Pranks Fred and George Weasley have pulled throughout their lives.'" Fred said telling them all what was on the piece of paper.

"Then you simply place the piece of paper through the slit..." George said as he slipped the parchment into the box. "And low and behold..." however he stopped what he was saying when the parchment didn't stop coming out of the machine. It just kept coming and coming. Harry soon came to the conclusion that he needed to move out of the way, or get buried in the parchment. He began to shrink away from the run away essay causing him to get very close to Ginny. So close that when Harry went to put his hand down to balance, it actually landed on her thigh. Harry quickly withdrew the hand not looking at Ginny. He didn't trust himself to look at her, afraid of what his face might show her.

"Sorry, Ginny." Harry mumbled out.

"It's okay Harry." Ginny squeaked.

Soon enough the parchment stopped coming out. Everyone was quiet as they were all starring at the mammoth essay that was produced. Taking advantage of everyone's rapt attention on the essay writer Harry managed to move away slightly from Ginny. Grabbing the end of the parchment that came out first Harry read the title. It was the same title that Fred and George had put in the machine. With his interest peaked he began to read through the first page.

Fred and George Weasley were born on April first nineteen-seventy-eight. Now to any that were paying attention this should have been a sign. This was apparent when at the tender age of five these two

boys became pranking prodigies. Completely irked by their older brothers minding, these two planed their first prank ever. Looking for some free time to run around outside Fred and George glued their older brother, Bill, to his chair at lunch while also making sure the glue solvent was safely hidden under their beds.

Not long after this did they start to sneak their mother's wand. Several of these instances led to the pranking of their younger brother Ron. Fred and George's favourite being to change their three year old brother's teddy into a giant spider. As these two pranksters grew so did their pranks. By the time that they were seven they had already begun inventing and had become quite devious.

Once again their older brother Bill was to fall victim to their unique form of revenge and playfulness. On the afternoon before Bills first date of the summer the twins could be found pouring their latest invention into the shower head. The fact that the invention didn't work as planed didn't bother these mischief makers one bit. It would still lead to and embarrassing situation and that was all that was needed for now.

Once in the shower preparing for this date, Bill had no chance of escaping this prank. Not noticing anything wrong Bill continued to wash and then dress for his date. Half an hour latter as he was arriving at his date's house Bill noticed his hand turning blue. Within minuets his date was in a fit of hysteria as Bill turned into a human blueberry. From the hair on his head to the tip of his toes he was completely died blue. While pleased with the results, the twins were disappointed that Bill had not turned multiple colours through the course of the evening. They were undaunted though, and by Bills sixth date they were up to 47 colours including chartreuse and an unusually hideous shade of green. If anyone thought that the lecture and subsequent punishment the twins received from the formidable Mrs. Weasley would stop the twins pranking carrier they were sadly mistaken...

"This is excellent." Harry said after reading it. "Guys where the hell did you get this?"

"Shop in Diagon Alley mate." George said.

"Cost us quite a pretty galleon too." Fred said.

"Especially when we bought two." George said now smirking.

"Yeah, we got one up in our room." Fred said flashing a smile at his twin.

"We're sorry about the length of the essay." George said "We didn't quite realise how many pranks we have pulled so far. It seems quite a lot."

"We forgot to mention that if you want it to be an exact length you need to put that on the piece of paper that you had the essay question on." Fred finished finally.

"I cannot believe you two. First the Marauders Map and now this!" Mrs. Weasley said heatedly.

"I think this is brilliant. I can definitely find a use for this." Harry said grinning like a fool. "I just need to keep it hidden from Hermione." This caused Ron and Neville to burst out laughing.

"Can we use it mate?" Ron asked.

"Yeah that would be brilliant." Neville said.

"Sure it would be unfair if I kept it to myself." Harry replied. Harry saw the smiles on their faces. "You can use it too Ginny, if you want." Harry said smiling at her and she smiled back.

"No, no, no. I don't like this one bit! Harry you are handing that to me right now!" Mrs. Weasley said.

"May I ask what gives you the right to confiscate something of Harry's?" Sirius asked.

"Well err..." Mrs. Weasley said clearly trying to find a plausible answer. "He sees me as a mother figure."

"That may be true. But I am his guardian and in charge of him. So I am the only person who has a right to confiscate it." Sirius replied. "Now Harry, hand it over here." Harry face dropped. That was definitely something he wasn't expecting from Sirius. Harry sighed

and held it up with disappointment written all over his face. Sirius came over and grabbed the box.

"I'll give it back to you at Potter Manor so Molly doesn't know you have it." Sirius whispered so only Harry and Ginny could hear him. They both found it very hard to keep the smiles off their faces, but managed to act sad enough, so that Mrs Weasley didn't think anything was up.

Harry's next present came from Mr. and Mrs. Weasley. Yet again, he could feel the familiar weight of another book. Harry opened it up, not to find a book, but a picture album. The inside was littered with pictures of activities they'd done as a family over the years. Some pictures were of him by himself and some of just him and Ginny. There were also pictures of him with the boys playing quidditch and generally roughhousing. When he got to the back of the book there was a picture of Harry and Ginny at Christmas last year. Harry watched as the picture Harry and Ginny sat on the couch opening presents. As Harry continued to watch the picture, picture Harry leaned over and pecked Ginny's cheek. When Ginny saw that picture she instantly blushed deep red. Harry looked up at Mr. and Mrs. Weasley and saw the loving looks on their faces. Starting to feel a little emotional he looked back down to the photo album. Turning to the very last page he found a picture of his mum and dad holding him as a baby.

"Thank you." Harry whispered out, brushing away a stray tear that had started to roll down his cheek. He really was overwhelmed. In this album were pictures of his family. The Weasleys, Sirius, Remus, Ginny, himself and his parents. He spent the next couple of minutes just flicking through the pictures. His mind remembering what had happened at each of the scenes, and then trying to imagine what had happened whenever he came across pictures of his parents. Wondering what may have caused them to be in that particular scene at that particular moment. Harry silently closed the book and emotionally whispered his thanks again.

"We thought you should have a family album. Sirius and Remus provided the pictures of your parents." Mrs. Weasley explained. "Arthur and I just put it together."

"Thank you." Harry said. "Really thank you."

"Everyone deserves to have pictures of their family Harry." Mr. Weasley said. "You are no exception."

Harry got up and gave them both a hug. Everyone was quiet. This behaviour from Harry didn't happen very often. Normally he was the funny; laugh out loud type of guy. To see him get emotional was rare, so everyone in the room knew how much he really did appreciate the gift from Mr. and Mrs. Weasley.

Harry smiled at the thoughtfulness of his surrogate mother and father, because that is what they were to him. It was not as if they could ever replace Sirius or his biological parents, but Harry often felt like they were truly his proper parents. Besides, they were his mother and father-in-law. With this thought, he moved onto the next gift.

This gift was from Remus, and by the looks of things this was ANOTHER book. Harry definitely had lots of reading to do now. As the last of the wrapping paper fell to the floor Harry was once again gazing upon a book, but this book didn't have a title and it was thin and made of soft leather. Harry randomly opened it up to see messy scribbles of writing in it with dates. Harry slowly read one date trying to understand what this book was exactly.

"12th February – Prank on Filch. It was a masterpiece. He didn't know what hit him. The dung bombs were priceless. Let's just hope that we marauders don't get detentions for it. Although, that wouldn't be too bad. I'd at least get to see the lovely Miss Evans in the potions lab whilst she gets extra credit for her work.

"21st February – Prank on the Slytherins. Wow was that a good one. Just the look on their faces as their plates started to throw their food at them was priceless. And Snivellus trying to counter the jinks as the pudding dumped on him, I about died. Even if we somehow get found out the detention will be well worth it."

Entries like this were written all over the pages. Harry read a couple more about the pranks his father and his friends pulled over their time at Hogwarts.

"We always berated your father for keeping something like that. What would have happened if Filch or a teacher got hold of it? It

would have had us in detentions for the rest of our lives, that's what." Sirius said.

"Although we're glad he kept it now. So we can give it to you." Remus said smiling at Sirius' theatrics.

"Wow. So you guys pulled all of these?" Harry said in awe.

"Yeah, every single one. It was quite fun at the time, the four of us meeting up to plan our next prank." Remus said.

"Thank you." Harry said once again smiling at the two old Marauders.

"It was your fathers. Like the invisibility cloak, it should belong to you." Remus said.

Harry didn't say a word but he didn't have to. Everyone knew Harry was a bit emotional right now. First with the photo album, and now his father's diary. Harry slowly moved on to the next present.

It was from Sirius and it was rather small too. Wondering what Sirius would give him that was this small, he unwrapped it and out dropped a small phial. In it, Harry recognised the shimmering bluish-white of a memory instantly.

"A memory, Sirius?" Harry asked confused.

Sirius nodded before looking softly at Harry. "Of your parents." Harry thought that the last presents from Mr. and Mrs. Weasley and Remus were emotional, but this. With this, he could actually see his parents walk and talk, interact with people, be alive. "Dumbledore should be here soon with his pensieve." Harry just sat there for a moment staring at the phial unable to speak.

"My parents?" Harry whispered out finally, hardly believing what he was holding in his hand. Sirius just nodded.

"It's sort of a present to Neville too." Sirius said.

"Why?" Harry asked looking at Neville who was just as confused as Harry was.

"Did you know who your mothers best friend was Harry?" Sirius asked. Harry shook his head.

"A girl called Alice who became Alice Longbottom." Sirius said looking at Harry and then at Neville.

"My Mum and Neville's mum were best friends?" Harry asked in awe .

"How come we were never told?" Neville asked.

"Truthfully Neville, I don't know. But the reason that it's a present to Harry and a present to you, Neville, is because your parents are in the memory as well." Sirius explained. Both boys just sat there, quiet for a while, trying to absorb what this meant.

"What's the memory of?" Harry asked pulling himself out of his musings.

"Nothing special, just a random dinner at Potter Manor, but I thought you might like to see it, that's all. You can watch it when Dumbledore gets here." Sirius explained in his nonchalant manner. Harry and Neville looked at each other before looking back at Sirius.

"Thank you, a lot." Neville said, now feeling quite emotional himself.

"They're your parents Neville." Sirius said seriously. "You should have memories of them."

"Neville's parents are dead?" Ron asked.

"Ronald Weasley! How can you be so insensitive by asking a question like that? Did I raise you with such little manners? Neville will tell you what happened to them in his own time. And that's even if he decides he WANTS to tell you." Mrs. Weasley hollered having rounded on Ron.

"It's okay Mrs. Weasley." Neville mumbled. "They're in the long term intensive care unit at St Mungo's. When I was a baby, after... after Harry defeated Voldemort... some Death Eaters came to our house. They... they...tortured them to see if they had any information on Voldemort's whereabouts. They went insane...." Neville went suddenly quiet at this point.

"Is there a cure?" Ginny asked quietly.

"Not that anyone knows of." Neville said. Everyone was quiet as Neville revealed one of his most important secrets about his life. Harry was still in shocked awe that Neville had revealed it. Especially to people he had only met today. He supposed that befriending Neville changed him more than Harry even realised. "Don't tell anyone at school please. I don't want them to know..."

"It's alright Neville." Harry said. "No one here will tell anyone. I promise."

"I promise too." Ginny said.

Harry smiled at Ginny. That was the type of person Ginny was; the person he was in love with. She always thought of others and wasn't hesitant in doing what was right. Soon everyone had promised not to breathe a word and Harry could see Neville relaxing slightly.

"Thank you... all of you. And thank you Sirius." Neville whispered out.

"You deserve to see them like that. Living happy. To see who they truly are." Sirius said.

Harry deciding that they had had enough reflection concluded that it was time to move on to the final present. And, like always, he'd left Ginny's to last. As he opened it, he could see Ginny's face full of fear, wondering if he would like it. He knew he would. He didn't even know what it was, but it was from Ginny. Simply because of that fact he knew that he would love it. He tore open the wrapping to see a small wooden box with a lid on hinges. He looked over to Ginny, confused as he opened the box to reveal a soft cushion of maroon and on it, a golden snitch. He sat in awe as he picked up the golden snitch and looked over it. It was then that he saw that the golden snitch was engraved with his initials. H.P. Ginny had given him his very own golden snitch.

Harry laid his hand flat out, the snitch on top of his palm, waiting for the snitch to come alive, but it didn't. Confused, he looked over to Ginny. "It's an international standard one. The same type that is used in the World Cup. There are incantations to have it start flying



and stop flying." Ginny explained. "Volatilis" she said out loud, and all of a sudden the snitch flew out of Harry's hand. Harry watched as it flew and zipped across the room, as it started to head back towards Harry; Ginny said "Subsisto Volatilis" and the snitch fell out of the air. Harry reached out his hand and caught it before it collided with the table. Harry looked at the snitch and then looked at Ginny. Did she know? Did she understand how much this meant to him?

"Ginny?" Harry asked her to get her attention. "Did you know that my father had his very own snitch too?" Ginny just shook her head. Harry moved close to her before putting an arm around her and pulling her into a massive hug. "You really have no clue, how much this means to me. Thank you so much."

"Really?" Ginny asked against Harry's chest.

"It feels like I have a solid connection to my dad now Ginny." Harry explained. "Not that I didn't have one before with the diary Remus gave me or the memory from Sirius, but that belonged to my dad. This belongs to me, just me. But my dad also had one. It's difficult to put into words, but trust me when I tell you I will treasure this for the rest of my life. And I know that I have it because of you."

"You're welcome Harry." Ginny muttered as Harry broke the hug.

"Maybe we'll get to use it soon." Harry said. "I quite fancy a game of quidditch."

"Yeah." Ron said "A game of quidditch would be cool."

"Yup me and Fred are captains." George said standing up. The rest of Ginny's brothers stood up too as well as Harry, but Ginny stayed seated. Harry looked at Ginny and then at her brothers. "You comin', Harry?" George asked.

"I'll only play if Ginny is on my team." Harry said. Ginny's head shot up with wide eyes looking straight at Harry with a scared look on her face.

"Ginny?" Fred asked perplexed.

"She can't play quidditch." George said.

"And why the hell not." Harry said rounding on him.

"She doesn't know how to fly." Ron stated as if it was the same as saying the sky was blue.

"Of course she does. I will not have you picking on Ginny." Mrs. Weasley said. Everyone looked at her, shocked that she was standing up for Ginny. "Now, if she wants to play with you, let her."

"But she doesn't know how to fly." Fred said again, as if no one had heard them the first time.

"Wrong, Fred. Actually if you want to know the truth she can out fly any of you. I remember telling you this at school last year. You just didn't believe me." Harry told him crossing his arms and giving them all a look that begged them to challenge him.

The brothers were quietly looking at Ginny confused. Harry was just waiting for them to make the first move. One of them had to, otherwise Ginny would feel like they were just putting up with her. Harry wasn't surprised when it was Charlie that stepped forward towards Ginny.

"Ginny can you fly?" Charlie said gently as he knelt down to look at Ginny straight in the face. Ginny looked at Harry for support and Harry just nodded his head in encouragement.

She took in a breath before muttering out. "Yes."

"Do you want to play with us?" Bill asked. Ginny turned to look at Bill before muttering a yes again.

"Go get changed into clothes you can play quidditch in then. We'll wait for you." Charlie said.

"Really?" Ginny asked yet again. Harry just smiled her.

"Really." Harry said. "Now go get changed and then come show your brothers how good you really are." Ginny shot straight up off the couch and raced towards the stairs. As she got to the bottom step she stopped, turned and ran straight at Harry. He didn't know what was happening until her arms wrapped around his neck. She just kept muttering thank you over and over again into his shoulder.

"No need to thank me Gin." Harry said as he quickly returned the embrace. Ginny pulled back and her smile was the biggest he had seen in a while.

"Thank you so much Harry." Ginny told him.

"I didn't do much." Harry muttered.

"You did." Ginny said walking away to go up the stairs. With that, she was gone up the stairs to get changed.

"You know I haven't seen her that happy in ages." Mr. Weasley muttered.

"So she can really fly?" Ron said yet again.

"Yes." Mrs. Weasley said. "Although, only Harry has seen her. According to him she's very good."

"Just how good?" Fred asked sceptically.

"You'll see." Harry said cryptically.

"Well she can be on your team Harry with Fred and Ron." Charlie said. "We'll have me, George and Bill."

"You don't think that a little unfair?" Harry said. "We'll cream you with those teams."

"You will? Will you?" Charlie asked.

"Yeah you got Ron in goal; he'll be good with that. You've got me as seeker and you got Ginny and Fred as two chasers. Fred can fly well and Ginny, well Ginny will just score loads of goals." Harry explained. "On the other hand you've got you; I know you're a brilliant seeker. You got Bill, but he didn't play quidditch at school, and you got George who plays beater not chaser. He can fly well like his brother but he's just not used to being a chaser." Harry explained.

"You're counting rather too much on the hope that you can catch the snitch before me and Ginny plays well." Charlie said.

"I know Ginny will play well." Harry said shrugging. "So well in fact that maybe I'll let you catch the snitch and we will still win."

"You're biased." Bill said waving Harry's comment away.

"I'm the only one out of you lot that has seen her play." Harry said smiling and they all suddenly got nervous. Ginny decided to come back downstairs at that moment and watched her brothers confused.

"Ready?" she asked.

"Yeah" Bill answered shaking himself out of his reverie. "And we sorted out the teams and all. You're on Harry's team with Ron and Fred.

"Okay." Ginny said nodding. "And thank you for letting me play."

"Ginny, we would have let you play if you asked us before." Bill said.

"But I did. You said I couldn't fly." Ginny said, her arms crossed over her chest.

"Ginny that was three years ago." Charlie said.

"I could still fly." Ginny mumbled.

"Look, let's not get into an argument now." Harry said stepping in between brother and sister. "She can fly, so let's play some quidditch." Charlie nodded his head and they all left for the quidditch paddock, Harry with his golden snitch in his pocket. When they got to the paddock they all mounted their brooms. That was when Ginny realised that she didn't have a broom of her own.

"I guess I just won't play." Ginny mumbled out before turning around to head back inside. Harry had other ideas and grabbed her arm and forced her to stay.

"I'll get you a broom." Harry said before rushing back to the house.

"Everything alright?" Sirius asked as Harry came running into the kitchen.

"Forgot... need broom for Ginny..." Harry breathed out, loss of breath preventing him from making coherent sentences. However, Sirius understood and apparated out. Seconds later, he returned with another Nimbus Two Thousand in his hand.

"What the...?" Harry asked confused.

"I decided that I wanted one too when I got yours." Sirius said shrugging. "I hardly ever use it. Ginny can use it today."

Smiling Harry returned to Ginny and the others at the quidditch paddock five minutes latter. Ginny looked in awe when she saw Harry carrying another Nimbus.

"You have two?" she asked incredulously.

"No, that's stupid. This is Sirius's." Harry explained. "He said you could use his."

"I don't want to break it." Ginny said shaking her head and eyeing the broom fearfully.

"And what makes you think you will?" Harry asked her.

"I don't know..." Ginny said continuing to eye the broom.

"Tell you what, you use mine and I'll use Sirius's." Harry said. Ginny shook her head again. "You used it last night."

"It's your broomstick. You should use it." Ginny muttered.

"Then use Sirius's!" Harry said, exasperated. Ginny slowly reached for Sirius's broomstick.

"It won't bite, you know." Harry said. Ginny frowned at Harry before firmly grabbing the broomstick. "Show them what you're made of Gin." Harry muttered to her before kicking off the ground. Harry looked back to see Ginny still on the ground. Ginny looked up at Harry and then up to her brothers who were already in the air. Slowly she got onto the broom and took a deep breath before kicking off the ground. As Ginny rose up next to him Harry smiled at her.

"Knew you could do it." Harry said to her when she got to them. "Right so first one to catch the snitch ends the game." Harry said and the rest of them nodded. Harry pulled the little gold ball out of his pocket and held it in his palm before muttering "Volatilis". The snitch zipped up in the air and within a few seconds it had disappeared from view. It was then Harry saw that Sirius, Mr. and Mrs. Weasley, Remus and Neville were by the edge of the paddock waiting to watch.

"Oh, no. I'm going to be so rubbish." Ginny muttered.

"No you're not." Harry told her as he flew near her. "You can fly so good, Ginny. Just think of this as another midnight training session." Ginny just nodded before looking back at her brothers.

"Harry!" Sirius shouted from below and Harry turned his attention to Sirius. "I put up a barrier around the paddock so that the snitch can't get loose. I didn't know if you thought of that." Harry just put his thumbs up for thanks. Soon they were ready to begin. Remus was going to throw the ball that they were using as a Quaffle. Once the quaffle had left Remus' hands the game was off and Harry began looking for the snitch. In the first five minutes Charlie's team had taken a 20 point lead. Harry stopped his search for a minute to watch what was going on. Whenever Ginny got the ball in her hands she would either fumble with it or drop it. Whenever she went to throw it, it would either go straight at Bill or not even reach him. Putting it down to nerves, Harry went back to searching for the snitch.

However, twenty minutes later the score was fifty to zero. Ginny was getting more and more nervous and upset with herself. Soon, she couldn't even keep a hold of the ball before one of her brothers from the other team would tackle it away from her. Harry knew that her confidence was really low and only getting lower, so he got the attention of Charlie and signalled a timeout. Harry and his team gathered into a huddle on their end of the paddock.

"Ginny are you okay?" Harry asked her as soon as they were huddled together.

"I knew this was a bad idea. I shouldn't have played. I'll just let you guys get on with it." Ginny muttered before turning to head indoors. Harry however, grabbed her arm forcing her to stay yet again.

"You are going to show your brothers how well you can play." Harry told her firmly. "It's just nerves Ginny. You and I both know you can play much better than this." Harry noticed that Ron and Fred were both staying quiet.

"I can't play as well as you thought, that's all Harry." Ginny muttered. "Trust me, it's better if I just don't play."

"I don't agree to that do you guys?" Harry asked shooting a look at Ron and Fred. They both quickly said no.

"They're just saying that. They weren't going to let me play with them before you stood up for me anyway." Ginny said.

"Yes but I didn't make you play did I. You wanted to. Don't you remember yourself racing up the stairs to get changed?" Harry reminded her. "Do you remember last night and all the moves I taught you? You did them without fault last night. You can play, and brilliantly at that too. It's just nerves and you being afraid that your brothers will laugh at you. Ginny can I ask you something?" Ginny just nodded her head while looking at the ground. Harry hated doing this to her but he didn't see any other way to make her see reason.

"Are your brothers laughing at you at the moment?" Harry asked her. She shook her head. "They aren't going to laugh at you, call you rubbish or whatever else you're scared that they'll do. Ginny you're so tensed up that you would think it was the world cup. It's just a friendly game in the backyard, one which we will probably play again tomorrow and the day after that. It doesn't matter. If it helps, just imagine it's the middle of the night and no one is around. Even I'm not there." Harry tilted her head up and looked her deep in those sparkling brown eyes. "I know you can play Ginny. This is your chance to prove to your brothers that you're not too small or too rubbish to play. To prove that you're just as good as them, even better. Prove it to your brothers Gin, and prove it to yourself."

As Ginny stared back into Harry's eyes, a smile slowly slid across her face. "I know you can do it Ginny." Harry told her. "I have faith that you can out play your brothers any day of the week. Please try one more time and just relax."

"YOU GUYS READY?" Charlie called out to them.

Harry looked at Ginny, waited for a bit before saying. "Are we ready Ginny?"

"Yes." Ginny said softly, nodding.

"I don't think Charlie heard you are we ready?" Harry said and again a smile formed across her face.

"We're ready!" Ginny shouted and took to the sky. Ron and Fred came to stand next to Harry.

"You know if this goes pear shape she'll never touch a broom again. You do know that, right Harry?" Fred said looking quite concerned.

"It won't." Harry muttered to himself, taking to the sky, and soon they were back in action. Harry flew around the makeshift pitch not really searching for the snitch. He was keeping an eye on Ginny. Once Ginny got a hold of the quaffle again, she flew straight towards the goal hoops. Harry had his fingers crossed; he knew she needed to score this one or it would all be over. She had to, she just had to. Harry looked on in shocked horror as all of a sudden the ball fell out of her right hand. Bill, seeing this, dropped his broomstick down low to catch the falling ball. However, before Bill could get there, Ginny's left hand came off the broom and caught it. Ginny smiled sweetly at him before chucking it into one of the empty goals. With an ecstatic look on her face, Ginny flew straight to Harry.

"I did it." Ginny screamed, "I did it."

"What was that?" Fred asked clearly amazed as he flew over to them.

"A move Harry's been trying to teach me." Ginny answered. "I've never managed to get it right 'til now."

"How many other moves has he been teaching you?" Ron asked.

"Just wait and see guys." Harry said, and soon enough they did see. After the first goal, Ginny's scoring became a regular thing, within ten minutes they had pulled the score back to 50-50. Ginny was scoring every goal for them.



"She can play then." Charlie said, just as amazed as the rest of his brothers, as he flew close to Harry, each searching for the so far elusive snitch.

"Yup I just need to catch the snitch." Harry said. "Put you out of your misery before Ginny makes the score really unfair." Unfortunately, that didn't happen. Within the next hour the score had crept up to 250 to 70, in favour of Harry's team, with Ginny still scoring most of the goals. It was starting to get dark before Harry caught sight of the snitch next to Ginny's head. Truthfully, he wasn't looking for the snitch but was staring at her hair and how it flew out behind her, changing hues in the fading light, but he wasn't going to tell anyone about that part.

Harry zoomed after it, missing Ginny's head by inches. The golden winged ball was fluttering in front of him just out of reach. Harry put on a burst of speed just as Charlie came into view next to him. He looked across to see Charlie concentrating hard on the snitch. They were knee to knee when the snitch went into a dive. The fact that Charlie could keep up with Harry on his older broom was a testament to his flying skills. Both Charlie and Harry reached out their hands as they came upon the snitch. Harry made a desperate swipe at the snitch, and felt his fingers graze the wings as he missed the snitch by inches. Harry had to look on with horror as Charlie managed, with his longer arms, to get his fingers around the snitch. Charlie had caught the snitch before Harry. Harry had only ever failed to catch the snitch once and that was because of Dementors in his first third year. Harry couldn't believe it. He never missed.

When Harry landed he saw Charlie's team at the other end of the pitch celebrating. Ron, Fred and Ginny landed next to him looking rather down-trodden. "I guess you can't catch the snitch all the time, huh?" Ron mumbled out.

"Why aren't you guys celebrating?" Harry asked, confused.

"Because we lost?" Ginny mumbled in disappointment.

"Sirius!" Harry shouted out to his godfather.

"Yo mate, what's up?" Sirius said walking over to them.

"Was anyone here on the ground keeping score?" Harry asked.

"I was." Neville said, as he came over to the group of quidditch players. "The score was 250 to 70 to Harry's team when Charlie caught the snitch." Charlie's team suddenly went dead quiet. "I forgot how many points the snitch is worth though." He said shyly.

"150 mate. Which would put the score 250 to 220. Charlie may have caught the snitch but we still won the game." Harry said before hugging Ginny and spinning her around. "Your goals won us that match Gin. Congrats."

"We won?" Ginny whispered out, completely shocked and trying to regain her balance.

"Yes, and all because you scored so many goals." Harry said. "Now who here is gonna say that Ginny can't play quidditch!" Harry finished addressing her brothers while letting her go. They all laughed out loud and went over to congratulate her. Ginny was still shell shocked. Although, after a few congratulatory pats and spins in the air by her brothers, Ginny relaxed. That birthday party was definitely one Harry would remember.

-oOoOo-

Harry sat in the living room of the Burrow rather nervous. Dumbledore had arrived after dinner and he had brought his Pensieve along with him. Now Harry and Neville were sitting on the sofa with the memory, which was their birthday present, swirling around in the Pensieve. Both boys looked nervous as they mentally prepared themselves for what they were about to see.

"You sure you two want to do this alone?" Sirius asked both Neville and Harry. Both of the boys had decided that they wanted to view the memory alone, just the two of them together, no one else.

"Yeah it just feels right, you know?" Neville said before turning toward the Pensieve. He looked at Harry who nodded and together they stuck their heads into the swirling mass of bluish white and fell into the memory.

Once Harry had his bearings he looked around and noticed that he was in the kitchen of Potter Manor. A younger Sirius and Remus were sitting at the table and at the sink was a woman with long, thick,

dark red hair. When she turned toward the counter they could see she had brilliant green, almond-shaped eyes.

"Lily." Sirius whined. "How much longer 'til dinner."

"You won't be getting any if you keep that up." Lily replied peeling some potatoes the old muggle way. Sirius, being the impatient person he was when it came to food, pointed his wand at the potatoes. All of them shredded their skins at once.

"SIRIUS BLACK!" Lily shouted. "HOW DARE YOU PEEL THOES POTATOES!" Picking up every single one she threw all of the potatoes in the bin. After shooting Sirius a look that could kill, she went into the cupboard, took out some new potatoes and started to peel them again. Sirius just groaned and bumped his head against the table.

"What's all the fuss?" came a voice from the doorway. Turning around, Harry saw a tall, thin, black-haired man with hazel eyes framed by glasses. His hair was messy just like Harry's.

"Your best friend." Lily said shooting a look toward Sirius again.

"What's he done now?" The black haired man said sighing.

"Hey what!" Sirius called out raising his head off the table to look at his best friend, scandalized. "Since when did you join her side? What happened to marauders sticking together?"

The black haired man smiled to Sirius. "She's my wife. And quite handy with a wand too. You don't want to go upsetting her!"

"Never stopped you before..." Sirius muttered.

"That was before she was my wife." the black haired man said smiling over to Lily who had just finished peeling the potatoes at the sink.

"I still don't know how you pulled that one off." Sirius said.

"Potter charm mate, the Potter charm." James said puffing out his chest.

"You better buck up that charm and sit down, tea's nearly ready." Lily told him and he took his seat next to Sirius. "How's Harry?"

"Fine love, he's fast asleep." James replied before helping himself to some bread that was on the table.

"James!" Lily said coming over and slapping him playfully on the hand.

"That hurt!" James said, shaking his hand and mock pouting.

"You're worse than Sirius!" Lily muttered, going back over to the stove where the kettle was boiling.

"Hey, no insulting." Remus said speaking aloud.

"Sorry James love, I didn't mean to." Lily said smiling at him.

"I meant to Sirius!" Remus muttered and James chuckled.

"Is Peter coming?" James asked.

"No he said he was busy." Lily said from the stove. She tasted the soup that she was making and then turned the heat down on the stove.

"I don't know why you don't use magic." Sirius grumbled from the table.

"You know why, it just doesn't seem to be the same if I don't cook it the normal way." Lily explained.

"Lily!" Sirius moaned. "You're a witch. Using magic is the normal way!"

Before Lily could retort, Remus decided that it was time to change the subject. "When are you two getting your portraits done?"

"Tomorrow." Lily answered, turning toward her husband, she fixed him with a stern glare. "This means you need to be on your best behaviour."

"Aren't I always?" James asked, smiling at Lily. She was about to answer when the doorbell rang. "I'll get it." James said hurriedly as he rushed off.

A minute or two later Harry and Neville heard foot steps coming back toward the kitchen. The door opened, admitting a smiling James, behind him were two people holding hands. One was female and the other male. The male had short brown hair and blue eyes and had a good body build. The woman had a round face and was slightly shorter than the male; she had hazel eyes peeking out from under long eyelashes.

"Hey Alice, Frank." Lily said, looking up from the stove.

"These three annoying you yet?" Alice asked. One look from Lily gave Alice the answer. "Why on earth did you marry James, for I still don't know?"

"Beats me too. I swear he used a love potion on me." Lily replied.

"Hey, we only tried that once and..." Sirius muttered out. However, what came next no one knew as both James and Remus covered Sirius' mouth with their hands. Both men looked at each other panicked at what was to come next if Lily had heard that.

"JAMES POTTER!" Lily screamed.

"It was in my second year." James said now cowering under his wife's fury while still trying to placate her. "And you didn't actually drink it."

"Yeah Peter drank it instead." Remus added chuckling. Sirius outright laughed.

"Thank Merlin it only lasted for a day; I was ready to kill Peter after that." James muttered.

"Where is Peter?" Frank asked, sitting down at the table and helping himself to some bread. James looked at Frank and then at Lily, expecting her to tell him off.

"He's a guest." Lily answered James' unasked question. Frank looked between James and Lily confused. "And Peter isn't coming tonight. Said he was busy."

"So it's just us." Alice said, sitting down next to Frank.

"What fun." Sirius muttered and he got a gentle slap with a tea towel around the head for his troubles from Lily. "That hurt!" Sirius exclaimed.

"Serves you right." Lily snapped back. As Lily served the soup the talk around the table shifted to quidditch and the blunders the ministry had been making for the men, and baby talk for the women. Every once in a while Lily and Alice put their own two knuts into the guys' discussions. After thirty minutes of Harry and Neville just watching their parents eating dinner, laughing and talking Sirius and Remus said goodbye and apparated out.

After saying goodbye to his best friends James turned toward the only man left in the room. "Hey Frank, do you know what this meeting is with Dumbledore?" James asked looking a little concerned.

"No but according to Dumbledore it's something to do with his new Divination teacher and the kids. Said it was very important to the war." Frank answered.

"Right Neville, time to go." Harry said hurriedly and grabbed Neville's arm, pulling them out of the memory and into the Weasley living room again.

"What was that?" Neville inquired once he got his bearings.

"Oh, nothing important." Harry said.

"Did you like it?" Sirius asked as he walked into the living room from the kitchen.

"I thought it was your memory of our parents?" Harry asked confused. He had seen Sirius apparate out before the memory ended.

"No Harry, it was your mother's." Sirius replied. "She gave it to me just before you went into hiding. Just in case. I've never actually seen the memory."

"Thanks." Harry said quietly reflecting on how good it felt to have actually been able to see and hear his parents. Usually the only time he got to hear his parent were when dementors were around, and hearing that wasn't exactly pleasant. Yet as good as it felt to have seen it, Harry wondered why his mother gave it to Sirius. At the same time, he was feeling relived that he had got Neville out of there before anymore was said about the prophecy. No one needed to know about that yet, and Neville defiantly didn't need to know that it could have been him in Harry's shoes.

"Yeah thanks." Neville said whispering, the expression on his face said that he too was reminiscing over being able to see what his parents were truly like.

"Don't mention it." Sirius finished whilst smiling.

As Harry walked into his bedroom at Potter Manor, he noticed that Godric was looking rather stressed out.

"You look tired." Harry told him.

"Well thank you. State the obvious why don't you." Godric replied a bit snippily. "Do you know who this is?" Harry turned to where Godric was pointing to see a creature with large bat like ears and large green eyes.

"Harry Potter." The creature said bowing. "So long have I wanted to meet you. Such an honour it is."

"Ah it's a groupie." Godric interrupted still on the grumpy side.

"Shut up." Harry hissed at him. Dobby looked scared and went over to Harry's dresser. "No wait I meant Godric not you."

"Godric?" Dobby asked, but before Harry could reply Dobby continued. "I'm sorry to barge into your own home Harry Potter sir. My name is Dobby sir. Dobby the house elf. Dobby has come to tell you sir... tis difficult sir... Dobby wonders where to begin."

"Why don't you sit down and start from the beginning?" Godric told him gently.

"SIT DOWN!" Dobby wailed. "Never, never ever has Dobby been asked to sit down before, like an equal?"

"Harry?" Godric said confused. "In my time house elves were treated with respect."

"A lot has changed in two thousand years Godric." Harry told him. Harry looked at Dobby to see he was thinking, muttering to himself. Then Dobby looked up shocked at Godric's portrait.

"Godric Gryffindor?" Dobby squeaked out.

"Yes?" Godric replied.

"The great Harry Potter has a portrait of Godric Gryffindor?" Dobby said wide eyed.

"Tell no one!" Harry hissed out. Dobby just nodded.

"To act like that after someone is polite to you." Godric interrupted. "Isn't the family you serve ever polite to you?"

Dobby shook his head before widening his eyes and banging his head against the chest of draws. Harry, ready for this, grabbed him and pulled him back. "Dobby as long as you're in my house you must follow my rules. You are not to punish yourself."

"Dobby is sorry sir." the elf muttered "Dobby almost spoke ill of his family sir."

"Your family... do they know you're here?" Godric once again interrupted.

"Oh no, Dobby will have to shut his hands into the oven doors because of this." Dobby replied shaking his head so that his ears flopped back and forth.

"Won't they notice?" Godric asked.



"Dobby doubts it sir. Dobby is being told to do extra punishments sir." Dobby replied.

"There's got to be a way to get away from there." Godric muttered.

"Not until I am set free sir, and I will never be set free. I will serve my family until I die." Dobby explained to Godric.

"That's preposterous." Godric said, sounding outraged.

"Did you know there are house elves at Hogwarts?" Harry asked Godric.

"What! We never had them before. Not whilst I was there!" Godric exclaimed "What is Dumbledore thinking. He treats them well, right?"

"Oh yah." Harry said. "Dumbledore treats them okay. They don't get paid or have holidays, but I think if he made them take that stuff that they'd leave out of protest."

"Cause they would be getting paid and have holidays?" Godric asked confused. "What has this world come to!"

"You sound like Hermione." Harry said.

"Then she's got a bloody good point." Godric muttered.

Harry looked back at Dobby who was eyeing him closely. "Dobby heard tell." Dobby whispered. "That Harry Potter sir faced He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named just weeks ago. And that Harry Potter sir escaped yet again!"

"That's correct." Harry said nodding.

"Ah sir." Dobby gasped. "Harry Potter sir is valiant and bold! He has braved so many dangers already! But, Dobby has come to protect Harry Potter, to warn him, even if he does have to shut his ears in the oven door later... Harry Potter sir must not go back to Hogwarts!"

"Sorry Dobby but I'm going back." Harry said gently.

"No, no, no!" squeaked Dobby. "Harry Potter must not go back; he must stay here where he is safe. He is too good and great to lose. If he goes back to Hogwarts, he will be in mortal danger! There is a plot sir, a plot to make most terrible things happen at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry this year! Dobby has known it for months, sir. Harry Potter sir must not put himself in mortal peril. He is too important sir."

"I'm sorry Dobby. But I'm going back." Harry said. "And nothing, not even you, can stop me."

"Then I must do it sir." Dobby said. "For Harry Potter's own good." With that, he rushed out of the bedroom with Harry chasing after him, wondering where he was going. Harry chased Dobby along the corridor, down the stairs and into the kitchen where a startled Sirius was sitting at the table, his newspaper forgotten.

"What are you doing Dobby?" Harry asked him out of breath. Dobby was looking around the kitchen and soon saw some left over birthday cake for Harry that Sirius had brought back.

"Don't even bother trying it Dobby. It won't do you any good." Harry said. Sirius was just looking at the two confused as hell.

"Harry Potter must promise not to go back to Hogwarts this year!" Dobby squeaked.

"What!" Sirius shouted out in confusion.

"I won't." Harry answered. "I've got to go back this year Dobby. I've just got to okay."

"Then Dobby must do it sir, for Harry Potter's own good." Dobby explained before starting to click his fingers.

"I told you that won't help you." Harry said. "There are wards around this manor. The ministry can't detect any underage magic that goes on in or around the grounds of Potter Manor."

"Please anything but the cake." Sirius begged, and Dobby and Harry looked at him strangely.

"There's a house elf in our kitchen that you've never met, telling me not to go back to Hogwarts, and all you're worried about is the cake!" Harry shouted at Sirius.

"It sounded like you had everything else under control." Sirius defended.

"Sorry Dobby, but I'm going back." Harry told him gently.

"Then Dobby must try." And with that he clicked his fingers and the cake flew off the kitchen top and with a loud crack Dobby disappeared.

With a click of Harry's fingers, the cake stopped in mid air. "Oh thank you." Sirius said relieved. "The cake is okay."

"The cake!" Harry practically shouted, turning angrily to look at Sirius. Giving Sirius an exasperated look, Harry turned and walked out of the door. He heard a loud crash that was the cake hitting the floor as the door closed behind him.

"Nooooo! Why did the cake have to be destroyed? What did you have against the cake?" Harry heard Sirius cry out. Shaking his head at the weird behaviour of his godfather, he walked back upstairs and into his room.

A/N: Very big chapter. And you got some information in this chapter underage magic can't be detected in Potter manor. :) Hope you liked the presents and the memory. I am very sorry about how long it took to put this up. But the next chapter should be up within a week

Disclaimer: I Do No Own Harry Potter.

The sun was just starting to peak over the horizon as soft gold streams started to seep into the topmost windows in the Burrow. It was beginning to look like a beautiful day, and that was perfect because today was Ginny's birthday. A stream of light snuck through the gap in the orange Chudley Cannon drapes and grew with intensity as they reached the bed against the wall. They seemed to be insisting that it was time to wake as they changed colour from a rich gold to orange to clear piercing white. Harry had awoken to this gradual wake up call and it was the intense white light that found him laying in bed thinking. His birthday had happened a week ago and something about that event made Harry think a lot. Or rather it was the memory he saw of his parents that had Harry contemplating. He had never seen them like that, it really was special. The fact of the matter was that he had never seen anyone act as they had. Sure Mr. and Mrs. Weasley were loving and never hid that from the children, but they were never playful the way that his parents had been. 'Or at least they are never playful in front of us.' Harry thought. It was something he imagined him having with Ginny one day, when they grew up. A life, just a plain normal life with Ginny, filled with playful banter and love. But in order to do that he needed her to love him. Harry was starting to get a headache thinking about this over and over.

Pulling himself out of bed Harry pushed his thoughts of the future out of his head. Today was about having fun and spending time with Ginny. After taking care of his morning ritual, all while trying to make as little noise as possible so as not to awake anyone, Harry walked downstairs. Looking up from the last step on the staircase, where his attention had been focussed so as to keep quiet, to see an unusual sight. Ginny was sitting on the couch in her dressing gown with a mug of hot chocolate. It wasn't that Ginny sitting on the couch or the mug of hot cocoa was the unusual part, it was that she was awake. She never got up before the sun was fully in the sky, it seemed to be a Weasley family rule or something. Once again he had stayed over at the Burrow; he always did on his and Ginny's birthdays.

"Hey Gin, what are you doing up so early?" Harry asked her as he went into the kitchen to get himself a mug of hot chocolate as well.

"It's my birthday." She replied. "Unlike you I can't sleep in late. I want to open my presents first thing."

"You need to wait for the rest you know." Harry reminded her as he walked out of the kitchen with a steaming cup of cocoa.

"Do I really have to?" Ginny moaned, causing Harry to laugh.

"Are you sure your name is Ginny... sure you aren't Ron in disguise?" They sat and talked for another hour before Mrs. Weasley was heard coming down the stairs.

"What do you want for breakfast, loves?" She said as she spotted Harry and Ginny having a tickling match on the sofa.

"Pre-sents." Ginny gasped out through her laughter.

"You know the rules. Breakfast before presents." Mrs. Weasley admonished as she walked in to the kitchen.

"Ah come on mum, just this once." Ginny said, managing to hold in her laugh now that her and Harry had stopped. "Harry didn't have breakfast before he opened his."

"That's because he slept past breakfast." Mrs. Weasley explained looking back into the living room while tying on her apron. "Now, what do you want for breakfast Ginny?"

"Pancakes... with strawberries and ice cream... and whipped cream!" Ginny said at once and Mrs. Weasley just smiled, shaking her head and went back into the kitchen. She should have known, it was, after all Ginny's favourite.

As Mrs. Weasley started to cook the smell of bacon and pancakes began to permeate the house. In no time the smell had awoken the boys in their beds and called to their empty stomachs. It wasn't long before the rumbling of feet on the stairs announced that the Weasley boys had awoken. As they descended upon the kitchen they took their seats with Harry and Ginny around the table. Unfortunately, neither Bill nor Charlie were able to be there. They couldn't get the time off for her birthday this year so they had to stay in Romania and Egypt. After every last platter of pancakes and bacon not to mention the strawberries and whipped cream were devoured the whole Weasley clan huddled themselves in the living room. Everyone was seated comfortably after such a large meal, talking while Ginny piled

her presents around her. Once she was confident that she had all of the gifts close at hand she proceeded to glare at Harry. For his part Harry immediately felt it burning into the back of his head as he listened to Ron, one look at her told him what she was after. Leaning across Ron as he continued on about something to do with the Cannons, Harry hit Fred upside the head. Fred turned to glare at him but caught sight of Ginny first. As with anyone who knew her he now understood why he had been hit. Soon a wave of nudges swept through the room and all eyes were on Ginny.

Ginny grabbed the first present which was from her parents and ripped off the paper. As Ginny's hands pulled in two opposite directions she was left with only wrapping paper as something bulky tumbled to the floor. Picking up the bulk of leather that was laying on the floor she recognised what it was, a pair of quidditch gloves.

"Well all your brothers have got a pair of quidditch gloves." Mrs. Weasley explained. "I know they're not an expensive pair but the person in the shop said they're pretty good and especially made for girls."

"Thanks mum." Ginny said happily as she flung her arms around her mother. Sitting back with a big smile on her face she moved onto the next present which was from Ron. Trying not to launch this present across the room she only used one hand to rip the paper away revealing the front of the rectangular object. It was a book. Ginny's face fell a little before she read the title, the smile spreading across her face showed how extremely happy she had become. She was once again jumping across the living room, only this time it was over Harry as well. Having seen the look in her eyes Harry was trying to sink into the couch so as not to be caught in the crossfire. Sailing over Harry, and just missing his stomach with her knees, she flung her arms around Ron's neck muttering her thanks. Whilst she appeared to be trying to strangle Ron in her excitement Harry looked over at the book lying on the couch. The red shimmering letters winked up at him as he read the title, *One Thousand of the Best Chaser Moves and Plays*, Harry was in shock. Ron had actually thought of something good for once. It probably helped that it was something about quidditch, he admitted to himself.

"Thanks Ron." Ginny said again as she went back to the couch and the book. "Now I can learn these moves and whip your butts even more at quidditch."

"Ah... oops." Ron muttered as the twins mock-glared at him. "Guess I never thought of that. Mind if you give the book back and I'll get you something else?" Ron joked, causing her to laugh.

Shaking her head and stuffing the book under the front of her shirt so that her brothers wouldn't be able to get a hold of it she replied. "Not a chance. I'm not letting you lot anywhere near this book. Well none of you except maybe Harry. I know he wouldn't try to hide it from me."

Outright ignoring the insolent and hurt glares that were being half-heartedly thrown at her, she turned to the next present. Noticing that this present had a name tag on it she immediately realised that it was from Percy. She opened it up with less enthusiasm than the last two, knowing that anything from Percy was likely to be her definition of boring. The paper dropped away as she thought 'Oh boy...' and looked upon the newly revealed study guide.

"It will help you with your studies this year Ginny. The first year is very important. Harry nearly failed it last year and I don't want the same thing happening to you."

"Err sure..." Ginny muttered. "But I still don't understand about Harry, he can do magic."

"He can now, but for the first two terms he couldn't." Percy said in his self-important voice. "Actually I believe he didn't show any magic until the actual exams. I heard that the board of governors was preparing to chuck him out. The only reason they didn't before the end of the year was because of the press they would get. The press would have a field day, chucking the famous Harry Potter, our saviour out of school. That's the only reason he stayed in for so long."

"But I passed the exams and I am going into second year." Harry said indignantly.

"Yes, yes that's true. Harry, I didn't say you don't deserve to go. I just said you nearly got chucked out. If it weren't for your celebrity status you probably would have been." Percy continued again, completely unaware of the glares he was getting.

"And how did you come across this information?" Sirius asked curiously, this being the first he had heard of it.

"I overheard a couple of teachers talking last term." Percy said.

"One of them didn't happen to be Snape, now would it now?" Harry asked.

"I believe so." Percy said thinking.

"Now that that is explained. Ginny, next present." Harry said shrugging and handing her the next present. This one was wrapped in colourful paper; in fact it looked like the colours had exploded onto the paper. It was from Fred and George, and knowing them they probably had. Taking into account that the twins hadn't turned any birthday presents into pranks for a few years she ripped into the wrapping paper. With a sigh of relief that nothing awful happened, Ginny finished taking off the wrapping paper to reveal a box of potions.

"I'm so not touching them." Ginny said straight away while pushing the box further away, causing the twins to look shocked.

"Now Ginny." Fred said.

"Would we do a thing like that?" George said.

"Do I really need to answer that about two of the biggest pranksters I know?" Ginny replied, glaring slightly at them. There was a subtle cough behind her and she turned to see Sirius by the door. "After the marauders of course." She added hastily, causing Sirius to smile and the twins to frown.

"We wouldn't do anything like that sis." Fred said now pretending to be hurt.

"Yeah...Not with your birthday present at least." George continued.

"But maybe later..." Fred finished in a conspiratorial tone.

"Fred, George don't you dare, it's her birthday." Mrs Weasley said scowling at them, causing them to shrink back away from her.



"Yes mum." They both said at the same time, fear evident in their voices.

"Do you trust them?" Ginny whispered to Harry.

"Not a chance." Harry replied shaking his head.

Ginny looked carefully at the potions. "What are they?" she asked the twins, confused as hell to what they could be if they weren't pranks.

"Glamour potions sis." Fred told her, sitting up straighter and flashing her a trademark twins smile.

"No more standing in front of the mirror for hours." George said flashing the same smile.

"Although knowing girls you'll do that anyway." Fred inserted dismissively.

"Just take a potion and it will put a glamour around you to make you look... well glamorous." George finished.

"Wow." Ginny said whilst looking through the instructions. "I'm not sure if I should be offended or pleased. But this is great, thanks guys. They could really save some time."

Ginny moved on to the next present and noticed it was from Bill. On the packaging was the word fragile so she took care when unwrapping it. After peeling away the plain brown packing paper Ginny opened the small box to reveal a sand globe. Looking into the globe she saw that in it was a sphinx and a pyramid. She shook it gently and a sand storm whipped up around the pyramid and sphinx.

"I like it. It will go well on my bedside table." Ginny said as she examined it and swirled the sand globe again.

"Both Bill and Charlie wanted to be here Ginny, you know that right? They just weren't allowed the time off that's all." Mrs Weasley spoke up interrupting Ginny's inspection of her newest present.

"I know mum." Ginny said looking at her. "I understand. Really, it's ok." She reached over for the second to last present and unwrapped

it. Inside was a plush baby dragon and when she pulled it out of the box it began to stretch its wings. She couldn't believe how life-like it looked; the only thing that gave away that it wasn't real was its soft texture. She put it down on the floor and it started walking about and acting just like a baby dragon. Ginny picked up a note that was at the bottom of the box and read it aloud.

Sis,

I know that you liked the baby dragons when you visited me over here at Christmas last year. So here is one for you. I was thinking of giving you a proper one, but then I thought mum wouldn't like it. Sorry I couldn't be there for your birthday. I really did try and get it off but my boss wasn't having it. Love ya loads

Charlie.

"It's so cute." Ginny said picking it up and letting it walk about in her lap. She sat it on the arm rest of the sofa and it curled up into a ball. She chuckled and went to get the last package. She read the scrap of wrapping paper that was being used as a name tag saying it was from Sirius. Unwrapping it with excitement, Sirius was one of the best gift givers, she uncovered the odd shaped present to find her very own Quaffle.

"My own Quaffle." She gasped.

"Yup." Sirius said. "I thought that you could use a Quaffle whilst playing quidditch with your brothers."

"Sirius, how much do Quaffles cost?" Mrs Weasley asked him suspiciously.

"Does it matter?" Sirius replied. "It's her birthday. Harry's got a snitch and Ginny's got a Quaffle. All we need now is a bludger and you got a full set. The twins' birthday is April the first right? A bludger each maybe?"

Ginny jumped up and hugged Sirius before putting the Quaffle with the rest of her presents before turning back to the pile to get Harry's. It was then she realised that there weren't anymore presents. That Sirius's was the last one.

"Ginny don't even think that I'm forgetting you." Harry said quickly when he saw a flash of hurt in her eyes. When she turned to look at him Harry saw that her eyes were starting to moist up. "Don't cry." Harry said quickly scooting over to her and pulling her into a hug. "I haven't forgotten you. I was hoping, with you parents permission, that for your birthday, when we go to Diagon Alley that they'll let me buy you your own wand."

Ginny looked up to Harry. The moistness that was in her eyes suddenly vanished as quickly as it had appeared. "My own wand?" she whispered in amazement, searching his face to be sure he was serious.

"I know you were planning on using your grandmother's but, well Mr. Ollivander told me when I got mine that no two wands are ever the same and you can't ever get the best performance out of someone else's wand." Harry told her. "So can I buy you a wand for your birthday? And please say yes because if you don't then I really don't have anything."

"Mum, can he?" Ginny said pulling away slightly from Harry and turning to look at her mother.

"Well of course he can love." Mrs Weasley said. "Otherwise he doesn't have a present for you and I don't want to be the reason of that." She smiled as Ginny turned back around and started hugging Harry even harder.

"Ginny, need to breathe." Harry squeaked out and Ginny quickly let go with a blush creeping up her cheeks.

"I'm getting my own wand." She whispered. "I'm getting my own wand."

"Thought you might like that." Harry whispered to her.

"Definitely." Ginny replied.

-oOoOoOo-

After they cleared up the rubbish Harry, Ginny, and her brothers went out to try the new Quaffle. Harry, of course, had his snitch; he carried it with him where ever he went now. So they had a pretty

good game of quidditch. Ginny of course, once again scoring the most goals with Harry, because Charlie wasn't there, catching the snitch every time. Afterwards Ginny's brothers moaned about not letting Harry and Ginny be on the same team ever again.

When they got back they all went into the living room to settle down with a game of Exploding Snap and waited for the birthday cake to be served. After about the fourth hand, Fred and George came in holding some letters.

"Guess what an owl just brought us." Fred said.

"It looks like some Hogwarts letters have arrived." George added handing them out.

Harry took his letter and opened it up to see the second year booklist...all Lockhart books. He silently groaned to himself 'Not the fraud again'. He had never much liked the man and having him as a teacher again just annoyed him.

"You've been told to get Lockhart books too?" Fred's voice broke through Harry's internal complaining as he peered over Harry's shoulder.

"That lot won't come cheap." George said looking at his parents. "Lockhart books are really expensive..."

"Well, we'll manage." Mrs. Weasley said looking worried. "I expect we will get a lot of Ginny's things second-hand."

"You don't need to mum." Ginny whispered and Harry turned to look at her to see tears running down her cheeks. "I...I...I d...didn't get in." she then dropped the letter on the table and got up and started to run towards the stairs sobbing.

Fred and George started hurriedly calling after her telling her to come back. Harry looked at them then reached over and grabbed the letter. As Harry started to read the letter he knew what was going on and by the third line he was seeing red. Slamming the letter back down on the table he jumped up and chased after Ginny. It all happened so fast that he had reached her before she had set one foot on the stairs. Grabbing hold of her arm he spun her around stopping her from going up them and forcing her to look at him.

"Ginny what do you mean you didn't get in?" Mrs. Weasley asked worried. "I don't understand... how could you not get in?"

"The letter said I didn't get in." Ginny sobbed out. "I'm not going to Hogwarts."

"Yes you are." Harry said forcefully gripping her shoulders causing Ginny to look at him. Harry wiped a tear from her cheek as it rolled its way toward her jaw. Much more gently Harry spoke looking directly at Ginny. "The letter is a fake Ginny. That's not your real letter. It was a fake."

"But it said..." Ginny whispered.

"Ginny it doesn't matter what it said. It's a fake. A cruel joke." He said the last sentence glaring over his shoulder at Fred and George. They had followed Harry and now stood in the kitchen doorway looking very guilty. "Where's her real letter?" he asked them, anger prevalent in his voice.

"In the kitchen." Fred muttered.

"We'll just... just go get it." George said not looking up.

"We didn't know she'd react this bad." Fred whispered before they both turned around rushing back into the kitchen.

"FRED AND GEORGE WEASLEY!" Mrs. Weasley shouted out as they disappeared into the kitchen.

"I'll be right back." Harry quickly told Ginny and he too went into the kitchen. Once the door had closed behind him he waved his hand towards the door muttering "Secretum volo". Finishing the incantation Harry sensed his magic flowing from him and the door glowed completing the charm. He looked up and saw Fred and George heading towards him.

"Err... hey Harry." Fred said nervously when he noticed him.

"Thirsty?" George asked.

Harry took one step towards them, eyes trained on them in a glare and staying quiet. Fred and George stayed where they were but an audible swallow and the looks on their faces told of their nervousness.

"What are you doing Harry?" Fred's voice actually shook and Harry couldn't help but feel glad that they were scared. It would make keeping this sort of thing from happening again easier.

"Yeah you're scaring us." George laughed nervously.

"Good." Harry whispered as he took another step towards them. This time they took a step back away from him. Suddenly before either of the twins could react, Harry lashed out. With both of his hands he grabbed both Fred and George by the scruff of the neck and forced them down onto the table. Making contact with the table the twin's bodies knocked some plates onto the floor which chattered causing a massive racket. They tried to shove Harry off but couldn't, he was just too strong. They didn't understand how he was doing it and that caused the fear in them to heighten. Harry consciously willed more of his magic to increase his strength, using his magic to make him strong enough to hold them there.

"Listen up and listen up good 'cause I'm only going to tell you once." Harry growled shoving them into the table a little. "What you just did was the most horrible thing you could have ever done to Ginny. Especially on her birthday! Do you know what Ginny's worst fear is?" Harry asked them in a threatening whisper. Both of them shook their heads. "To be left behind. To be forgotten." Harry continued to whisper to them and this was some how more frightening than if he had screamed. "What you just did was literally bring her worst nightmare to life." The look of horror on their faces was one of utmost sorrow. "Do you know what a Boggart is?" Harry asked them again. They both nodded their heads. "Good, then you know what it does. I'd bet any money that when Ginny faces a Boggart it would be of her being forgotten, left behind. So I'm going to warn you now. Ever make fun of Ginny again, ever prank her again, and you WILL have me to answer to." Harry let his magic build up slightly and saw the look of fear slide across their faces when they felt Harry's magic. Harry smiled sweetly at them. "Never prank her again. Or I will get madder than you have ever seen me, and that anger will be directed toward you. And trust me when I tell you, you don't want that happening."

"S-s-sure Harry." George stuttered quietly.

"No pranking Ginny. We go it." Fred added quickly.

"I mean it!" Harry told them fiercely.

"We understand." They said together. Harry looked at them and could tell that they meant it. They really were scared. 'Job done' he thought as he let go of them.

"Tell no one what happened. Don't breathe a word to anyone. Got it." Harry added as he picked up the broken plates and put them in the bin.

"We got it." they said in unison again. Harry took one look at them and went back into the living room, cancelling the spell he put on the door way as he went. He just acted like none of that had ever happened.

When the twins got back to the living room they gave Ginny her proper letter but she was too scared to open it. She continued to rotate it in her hands, looking from the address to the wax seal and back.

"You'll get in Ginny." Harry reassured her. "Trust me. Especially if your bat bogey hex is anything to go by."

Ginny smiled at that and opened up her letter. She read the first line and Harry saw happiness cross her face which made her even more beautiful in Harry's opinion. Suddenly she jumped on Harry, causing him to fall backwards and Ginny to land on top of him.

"I got in, I got in." She said ecstatically.

"Oh I never could tell with you jumping on me like that." Harry drawled. "But I must say, I knew you liked me Ginny but jumping on me like that. Surely you should do that when there are a few less observers." Ginny playfully hit him on the arm.

"Ow! That hurt. Was is it with women and hitting people!" Harry moaned out.

"Prat." Ginny muttered as she got off him.

"So you got in?" Mrs. Weasley asked smiling at the two as Ginny mumbled something about boys.

"Yup I'm going to Hogwarts!" Ginny exclaimed. Harry smiled as Ginny re-read her letter and the smile got bigger and bigger. 'Ginny was going to her first year at Hogwarts' Harry thought. 'I just hope I made the right decision about the Chamber of Secrets.'

-oOoOoOo-

The next morning found the Weasleys, Harry and Sirius standing around the fire grate in the Weasleys' kitchen.

"Right Harry dear you first." Mrs. Weasley said holding out a small pot with powder in it.

"You know, Sirius could just side apparate me there ..." Harry said eyeing the floo powder.

"You're not scared are you Harry?" Ginny teased.

"Me... scared... I don't have a clue what you're on about." Harry said quickly. "I ain't scared... I just don't like it. There's a difference."

"Of course there is." Ginny said rolling her eyes. "Here, let a pro show you how it's done." she grabbed a handful of floo powder and before anyone could stop her she stepped into the grate. She dropped the floo powder and opened her mouth to shout Diagon Alley. However, just as she was saying the words she coughed. So rather than saying Diagon Alley, it turned out "Coughturn Alley." Harry watched in horror as Ginny disappeared in a furl of green flames. Before anyone had a chance to register what had just happened let alone stop him Harry grabbed some more floo powder and jumped into the fire. He dropped the floo powder and shouted as clear as day "Coughturn Alley." Harry just hoped and prayed he'd come out in the same place as Ginny.

Fire grates rushed by and he saw snatches of living rooms, kitchens, shops and bedrooms. After what felt like forever he felt himself slow down and prepared himself for the landing. He felt his feet touch solid ground and stumbled forwards into what appeared to be a



shop. Once Harry got his bearings he looked around at the unfamiliar shop. Studying the shelves and all the odds and ends piled upon them he realised that it was nowhere he had ever been before, it was weird. Harry was just trying to work out where he was when he heard a bell come from the back and spotted a middle aged man come out. He had brown hair and wore a brown leather jacket with jeans and white trainers.

"Sorry but we're closing." The man spoke up when he noticed someone was in his shop. Looking at the supposed customer he noticed that something was wrong. "Who are you? Need some help?" he said in what Harry thought was an American accent.

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When Sirius saw Harry get whisked away he wondered what he should do. Molly was going hysterical. Sirius knew Ginny would be alright. Harry had gone after her and he knew he'd make sure Ginny was alright. The question was where were they? They could be anywhere. Sirius had never heard of a place called 'Coughturn Alley'.

"What should we do?" Mrs. Weasley said, worry and fear pouring from her voice.

"Go to Diagon Alley." Sirius replied having made up his mind.

"But Ginny!" Mrs. Weasley cried, her voice quivering.

"Harry can find her." Sirius said calmly to Mrs Weasley to soothe her down. "If anyone can find her it's him. And when Harry does he'll probably take her to Diagon Alley, because that is where we were heading. Let's just go to Diagon Alley and Harry will bring her to us. I have total faith in him."

"But he's only twelve." Mrs. Weasley counted. "And Ginny is only eleven. They could be anywhere. I haven't even heard of a place called 'Coughturn Ally'."

"Harry will find her." Sirius insisted trying to reassure her. "Let's just go to Diagon Alley otherwise Ginny and Harry will get there before us." Mrs. Weasley still looked unsure. "Trust me. Harry and Ginny will be alright."

Ten minutes later found the whole Weasley bunch in Diagon Alley. They walked along the cobble street towards Gringotts, all of them looking around trying to catch a glimpse of the two missing from their party. After one fast paced and bumpy ride the red headed clan decided to split up; much to Mrs. Weasley's annoyance.

"But I already lost one child today; I don't want to lose anymore. And where are they, shouldn't they be here by now? I need to go look for her." Mrs. Weasley wailed as the idea to split up was addressed. Tears were pouring down her cheeks now and it didn't look like they were going to stop anytime soon. "I don't know what I'd do if I lost my baby."

"Now dear, Ginny isn't a baby anymore." Mr. Weasley said putting a comforting arm around his wife. "And she's in safe hands. Harry will look after her. You know him. He cares for her more then he lets on. More than I think he even knows. Both you and I know that Harry won't let anything bad happen to her." Mrs. Weasley didn't look convinced. Taking the lead Mr. Weasley looked to his children and addressed them. "We will all meet back up in Flourish and Blotts in an hour to buy your school books."

As soon as the words were out of his mouth the Weasley children scattered. Each seeming to go off in a different direction and trying to get away before their parents changed their minds.

"Molly. I guarantee you that when you get there Ginny and Harry will be there too." Sirius said, reassuring for what was felt like the fiftieth time before going off in his own direction.

"I just don't want to lose her." Mrs. Weasley sniffed as she turned to her husband. "She's my only daughter."

-oOoOoOo-

Harry looked at the man that had come out from the back of the store. "Err hey I'm kinda lost. Where am I?" he asked the man.

"Where are you?" repeated the man with the American accent. "Well the best place to buy your wizardry stuff in all of Orlando. Crofton Alley."

"Orlando?" Harry asked drawing a blank. He didn't know anywhere in Britain called Orlando.

"Yeah kid." The man said. "You know, Orlando, the orange county. The sunshine state."

"Huh?" Harry asked still drawing a blank.

"Florida!" The man said exasperated.

"Wait. You mean... I'm actually in America?" Harry asked him.

"You aren't from around here are ya?" The man asked.

"No." Harry replied. "I'm from England. I'm looking for someone. You haven't seen a girl have you. Around eleven years old red hair?"

"Lost your girlfriend?" The man asked smiling.

"This is no joking matter mate!" Harry hissed out. "Have you seen her? She said the wrong thing in the floo network. I said the same sort of thing she did to come after her and I came out here."

"Sorry kid. Haven't seen her." The man said thinking. "But you say that you're from over on the other side of the Atlantic, right?" Harry nodded. "Well there are only two other places in Crofton Ally that have international floo network as well as this place. The pub and the post office. To get to the post office turn right out of the door, to get to the pub turn left. I suggest going to the pub first. It's very late at night here and you don't want to meet the type of crowd that hangs about that place after dark. If she's there you'll want to find her and quick. This alley ain't a safe place at night."

This caused Harry to panic slightly. "Thanks." He said quickly and hurriedly headed towards the door.

"I'll stay open a little bit longer so you and you friend can get back." The shop keeper called after him.

"Don't worry about it I have ways to get back on my own. Thanks for the help." Harry quickly replied before turning left out of the door and towards the pub at a slight jog, looking out for a flash of red hair. He was starting to really panic as the shop keepers words reverberated

in his head. Thinking that someone could be hurting her he picked up his pace until he was all out running, thoughts flying wildly through his head. He couldn't lose her. Not now. Not after all he'd done since he came back. Not like this. Harry looked in the shop windows as he passed, looking for her and in between the alleyways but no such luck. Harry was starting to get more and more worried as the minutes ticked by. It was pitch black in the alley since it was only about 4am local time. He had been looking for almost half an hour and still no sign of Ginny. At the end of the alley Harry finally came to the pub the shopkeeper was talking about. One look at it made Harry never want to go in there. It was run down, the paint was peeling and it had the look of a place where you didn't want to get near the shadows. He just hoped that if she had come out there that Ginny hadn't had to ask for help. He doubted that anyone in a place like that would or could be helpful.

As Harry got nearer to the pub he saw a small group of men near the entrance. They all had a bottle of fire whisky in one hand and were dressed in muggle clothes. Harry watched as they chatted, laughing boisterously and pushing each other around. Suddenly one of them went over to a bin and kicked it over, spilling its contents onto the street, causing the group to laugh out loud as if some great joke had been told.

Harry looked at the entrance to the left of the group hoping against hope that Ginny hadn't come out here. But it wasn't to be. As Harry studied the doorway out came the petit red headed figure of Ginny, tears running down her cheeks. She looked absolutely terrified.

"Ah, has someone lost their Mummy?" Asked one of the men from the group as Ginny started to walk away from the pub, her arms folded around herself as if trying to create a shield. Seeing that a confrontation was on its way Harry upped his pace.

"You know it's rude to ignore someone. Especially an elder." Said another man as they started walking after her. Ginny was too scared of the men following her to notice that Harry was walking straight at her and was only a few meters away from her.

"Go away." Ginny mumbled not looking at them but continuing to stare at the ground in front of herself.

"Why?" asked the man. He smiled wickedly at her and picked up his pace.

"Cause if you don't I'll make you." Harry growled out. Ginny's face shot up so fast that Harry thought she might get whiplash, her eyes scanned the alley in front of her and landed on Harry not but a few feet away. She burst into a run and threw herself around his neck pulling Harry into a fierce hug. Harry wrapped one arm around her and held her tight as he kept his wand at the ready in his other hand, prepared to protect them if he had to.

"Harry." She breathed out, her body starting to shake from tears of relief. "I was so scared."

"It's alright Ginny." Harry told her as he rubbed her back, never taking his eyes off the men in front of them. "Everything is going to be fine."

"Ah look, she's got herself a boyfriend." The man mockingly sneered causing laughter to erupt from the rest of the group.

"Tell me... you got a girlfriend?" Harry asked the man politely.

"What's it go to do with you boy." He growled out obviously not liking that this kid dared inquire of such a thing.

"Cause if you ever want one I'd suggest you leave us alone." Harry threatened the man as he raised his wand at him.

"You think I'm going to feel threatened by some measly kid?" the man asked laughing with his friends.

"Sorry I seem to have forgotten my manners and I have not introduced myself. My name is Harry... Harry Potter." Harry said and enjoyed the effect those words had on the group. "I'm sure you've heard of me. I was the one to defeat Voldemort. I'm sure you Americans have heard of him, even if he didn't affect you."

"Err...well.... we might have heard of you." The man said stalling.

"So let me ask again." Harry said, a maniacal smile now crossing his face. He still had not let go of Ginny and his protective stance

combined with the look was positively frightening. "Do you have a girlfriend?"

"What's it to you?" The man growled out.

Harry smiled a little more and dropped his wand down to the man's private area. "Because I'm sure if you do she won't like you when I'm finished with you. And you might find it slightly difficult to find yourself a new one."

"Well err... we'll be off now." The man said his fear finally cutting through his drunken haze. Turning his back on Harry and Ginny the man motioned to the rest of the group and they all moved away from them and retreated down the alley. Harry chuckled and quickly pulled Ginny away from the pub and into an abandoned alleyway.

"Ginny are you alright? Are you hurt?" Harry asked her quickly once they stopped walking. Ginny shook her head. "Are you sure?" Harry asked her again looking her up and down searching for any sign that she had been injured.

"I'm fine, just a little shaken up. Where are we?" Ginny asked him.

"America. In a place called Crofton alley." Harry explained and he saw shock cross Ginny's face. "Look we need to get to Diagon Alley okay. Your parents will be worried."

"How?" Ginny asked.

"Simple." Harry said gently to her and then called out for Estelle in his mind. Nothing happened. A little disconcerted, Harry called out a little louder the second time. There was a flash of fire and Harry's blue and white phoenix appeared in front of him.

"What on earth are you two doing in America?" Estelle asked him.

"Mix up with the floo. Look we need to get to Diagon Alley. Can you help us?" Harry asked.

"Can I help you? Is that some kind of new insult? Of course I can help you. Just grab hold of my tail feathers. I'll take you there in a sec." Estelle testily told him.

"What did she say?" Ginny asked.

"Just keep hold of me tightly Ginny. Estelle is taking us to Diagon Alley." Harry explained to her, while shooting Estelle a look that clearly said women. Ginny grabbed hold of Harry's arm as he wrapped it once more around her waist. Harry, using his only other free hand, grabbed Estelle and she flamed them to Diagon Alley.

Harry had to wait a couple of seconds once they landed to get his bearings. Going from a place where it is dark to a place where it is bright and sunny all in a split second isn't a pleasant experience.

Once Harry got his bearings he checked on Ginny to see if she was alright. After he made sure that Ginny was okay he started to cautiously walk out of the alleyway with Ginny in tow. He kept looking up and down the alley hoping that no one would see that two kids came out an alleyway that no one went into.

"Thank you Harry." Ginny said as they successfully exited the alleyway without anyone noticing and started down Diagon Alley. "You know...for coming to find me. I'm not sure of what would have happened if you didn't.

"Well it doesn't matter now so don't worry about it anymore. You're okay and your mum is going to be so glad when she sees you. We've been gone an hour so they're probably in the book store. I hear Gilderoy Lockhart is going to be there; so naturally that's where your mum would be." Harry explained. They turned left and headed over to Flourish and Blotts. By the time they got to the store there was a massive queue leading outside the door.

"Have you read all the stuff he's done?" Ginny asked excitedly. It seemed that her earlier worries and fears had melted away at the sight of the queue. "He's done so much it's amazing. He's awfully brave."

"Someone got a crush?" Harry teased. He was glad that Ginny was happy and excited again. But if he was honest with himself he didn't like that the cause of her delight was the Great Blond Fraud.

"Someone's not jealous are they?" Ginny responded shutting Harry up. How was he supposed to respond to that. He couldn't very well tell her the truth; he didn't think she was ready for the truth. Once

they got inside they were continually bumped and pushed. The shop it seemed was filled with witches and wizards, but mostly witches, way past its capacity. Harry thought that if one more person stepped into the building it was liable to explode. Not wanting to lose Ginny again, Harry grabbed hold of her hand tight and started to push his way through the crowd. Walking around another stack of Lockhart books Harry and Ginny spotted a line that had a mass of red. When Ginny saw her mum in line she immediately let go of Harry's hand and rushed over to her. Mrs. Weasley didn't know what had bumped into her this time until she felt the arms that had snaked around her waist and noticed the red hair. Looking down at the child clinging to her she suddenly realised it was Ginny.

"Oh my baby girl you're alright." Mrs. Weasley cried as she embraced her youngest and silent tears rushed down her face. "We were so worried."

"I'm alright mum." Ginny mumbled against her mother's side. "Harry found me."

"Harry, how can I ever thank you?" Mrs. Weasley said looking up at Harry.

"Ginny's my best friend. I didn't want to lose her either. I don't need you to thank me." Harry muttered but Mrs. Weasley said nothing of it. She already had her attention focused on making sure that Ginny was one hundred percent sound.

"Well she's safe, that's all that matters. Where was she anyway?" Mr. Weasley asked as Mrs. Weasley fussed over Ginny.

"A place called Crofton Alley." Harry told them, eyeing them as he wondered if they knew where it was. 'Hopefully,' Harry thought 'they won't know where it is and be so happy that she's back that they won't ask.' Just as the thought formed it was dashed to pieces.

"I've never heard of anywhere like that in Great Britain." Sirius wondered aloud. "Where is it?" he asked them.

"I don't know." Ginny muttered.

"Harry?" Mr. Weasley asked.



"Erm." Harry said nervously while shooting a look at his godfather. He just had to go and say didn't he. "I think the person I asked said something about Orlando. But I'm not sure." Harry rushed through his half truth and once again hoped that they didn't know where that was and would leave it alone. He didn't really want to face Molly if she found out where her daughter had really been.

"Orlando?" Mrs. Weasley asked confused.

"Hang on you mean Orlando, Florida?" Sirius said working it out. Harry winced.

"You mean my Ginny was in America?" Mrs. Weasley asked Harry. He could see the panic building in her; this was the last thing he wanted to happen. A panicked Mrs. Weasley was a loud Mrs. Weasley.

"She's safe now. There's nothing to worry about." Harry reassured her. Before he could even finish what he was saying, Mrs. Weasley did a complete turn around and instead of yelling she began to tear up again as she pulled him into a hug.

"If you hadn't found her..."

"It's fine. I found her and it's okay." Harry's voice was muffled as Mrs. Weasley squeezed him tighter to her.

"Oh I'm so glad you decided to walk into our garden when you were younger." Mrs Weasley muttered. "You're such a good friend to Ginny."

"Thanks." Harry muttered and he could feel a blush cross his face. Ginny just gave him a small smile and tried not to giggle at the sight of Harry blushing.

"Don't mention it. But we need to be quiet now; we should be able to see him in a minute..." Mrs Weasley said trying to peer over the crowd. Following where Mrs. Weasley was looking Harry saw Lockhart come into view.

"Isn't he so handsome?" Harry heard Ginny mutter.

"Oh please... not you too Ginny. He's a fraud. A liar." Harry told her and he couldn't stop the vehemence in his voice. Ginny just put her hands on her hips and raised an eyebrow at him.

"You're just jealous." Ginny said smiling at him.

"Of Lockhart. Come on; give me someone worth being jealous about then yeah maybe, but him? He's just an old fraud that takes credit for other people's deeds." Harry said gesturing wildly in Lockhart's direction.

"How dare you say that!" Came the voice of Hermione from behind him. "He's not a fraud, I bet you haven't even read his books."

"Book can be misleading!" Harry said turning around to see his bushy haired friend. "And it's nice to see you too Hermione."

Hermione waved away the greeting and went on at Harry for calling Lockhart a fraud. "What proof have you got that he's a fraud? If you read his books and then you would see that he's just really good at what he does."

"Oh I didn't say he wasn't." Harry agreed. "He is extremely good at what he does. Just what he does is what we are arguing over, Hermione. You believe the cock and bull stories he writes in his books. I know the truth. If what is written in the books are true then how do you explain the mix up of dates?"

"What ever do you mean, mix up of dates." Mrs. Weasley interrupted. She had obviously overheard the conversation.

"I mean like when in 'Break with a Banshee' it states that he is in a cave for two weeks between the twenty second of June to the third of July, when at the same time in 'Voyages with Vampires' it states he's in a small, run-down hotel for one and a half weeks in between the same dates." Harry rattled off.

"It does not." Hermione said opening up 'Break with a Banshee' and reading it. "So you're right about break with a banshee but in Voyage with the... oh." Hermione stopped talking when she read the paragraph Harry was talking about. "You're right. Surely he wouldn't be so stupid to mess up those dates."

"He's a fraud." Harry said again. "I'm just confused as to why no one has worked it out yet."

"We'll I believe you." Ginny said next to him. "You would never lie to me." Harry winced slightly about that statement. He always hated it when she said that.

"Come on, let's get out of here." Mrs. Weasley said and she turned to leave the queue. Before they even had a chance to move a photographer moved in front of Ron blocking his way.

"Out of the way lad, out of the way. This is for the Daily Prophet." The man with the camera said and proceeded to push Ron aside.

"Big deal." Ron muttered righting himself and straightening out his jumper. Harry got nervous as he remembered what had happened after this the first time. Harry continued walking towards the door hoping that Lockhart wouldn't notice him. Luck obviously wasn't on his side today.

"It can't be...is it really... Harry Potter?" he heard the voice of Lockhart say. Suddenly he felt a hand grab him by the scruff of his neck and pull him away from Ginny and the others. Once he had been deposited next to Lockhart he turned and started to walk away again. The photographer just pushed him back towards where he was and Lockhart draped an arm around Harry's shoulder. "Nice big smile Harry, together me and you are worth the front page." The photographer started to take pictures as Harry tried to wriggle out of Lockhart's grasp.

"Well you could get onto the front page for kidnapping." Growled a voice that Harry instantly recognised as Sirius's. "Then you would be able to be on it on your own and you wouldn't need Harry's help to make the front page. Isn't it a shame that you can't make it on your own? Especially after everything you've done?"

"Kidnapping?" Lockhart mumbled looking at Sirius who had come back to find Harry.

"Yes, isn't it strange. My godson and I were walking out of the store when all of a sudden he wasn't by my side anymore. And low and behold when I turned around, I saw a photographer taking him against his will over to you. And I couldn't really believe my eyes

when the photographer let go and he tried walking away you grabbed hold of him not letting him go, holding him against his will. I think you'll find that under the definition of kidnapping!" Sirius explained as though he were talking to a child.

Harry was trying so hard not to laugh as he saw the colour drain from Lockhart's face. "Well who wouldn't want to come here and be on the front page?" Harry couldn't believe it; the man seriously believed that anyone would love to be in the spotlight, especially with him.

Harry slowly raised his hand. "Err, me!"

"Well Harry, why didn't you say so!" Lockhart said. "Ladies and Gentlemen I formally apologise to young Harry here and to show that there is no ill will I am willing to give him my full works free of charge." There was a round of applause and hushed ahhh's and 'Isn't he so kind' could be heard. "Ladies and Gentlemen." Lockhart started up again once the crowd stopped clapping. "I feel that this is the best moment to announce my latest news. I have great pride and pleasure in announcing that this September I will be taking up the post of Defence Against the Dark Arts at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry! I hope that the students, like Harry here, can learn from my experiences."

There was a massive round of applause when Lockhart finished, and with his last words Harry had Lockhart's full works shoved into his arms, and he was released. Harry steadily walked over to where Ginny was standing and dropped the books into her new cauldron that Mrs. Weasley had bought for her whilst Harry was finding her. "You have them Gin. I'd rather buy my own. I hate getting stuff for free just because Voldemort managed to kill my parents and not me." Harry knew if he used that excuse Ginny would accept them.

"Enjoy that did you Potter?" came the drawl of Draco from behind him. "Famous Harry Potter; can't go into a book store without making the front page.

"Leave him alone. It's not like he asked for that." Ginny growled out.

"Ah it's your girlfriend Potter." Draco drawled. "I take it she definitely puts out then if you keep that around you. It's the only reason that anyone would."

"Why you..." Harry said walking towards Malfoy, planning on at least making him have to stay in St Mungo's for about a week. However, Ron and Hermione both appeared in front of him blocking his path to the rat faced weasel.

"What's going on?" Ron asked looking from an irate Harry to the stuck-up Malfoy. Upon noticing him Ron turned and faced Malfoy. "Oh, it's you."

"Well isn't this strange... Weasleys in a shop. What did you parents have to do? Sell your house to pay for all these. No wait I don't think your house would fetch that much." Malfoy said looking smug; he obviously thought he had displayed great wit. Ron started to advance towards Malfoy, his hands clutched in fists when Mr. Weasley walked over to them. For the second time in as many minutes Malfoy had survived only due to an interruption.

"Ron!" Mr. Weasley called out and Harry saw Fred and George walking after him. "Why are you still in here? It's mad in here, come on let's go outside."

"Well, well, well, Arthur Weasley." came the drawl of Lucius Malfoy who had just appeared out of the crowd and came to stand next to his son..

"Lucius." Mr. Weasley replied politely but coldly.

"Busy time at the ministry I hear. All those raids. I do hope they are paying you overtime." He said as he picked up Ginny's copy of 'A Beginners guide to transfiguration.'

"Obviously not. What's the point of being a disgrace to the wizarding world when they don't even pay you well for it?"

"We have a completely different idea on what disgraces the name of wizard Malfoy." Mr. Weasley responded, by the sound of his voice it seemed that he was struggling to stay calm.

"Clearly". Mr. Malfoy said as he looked over to Hermione's parents. "Associating with muggles. And here I thought you could sink no lower." Harry watched as Mr. Weasley threw himself at Mr. Malfoy, knocking bookshelves and all over. They were at it for a couple of

minutes each landing a punch every once in a while until Harry saw Hagrid striding over towards them to break the fight up. Mr. Malfoy was holding Ginny's transfiguration book again, having picked it up from where he dropped it. But this time Harry noticed the diary tucked within its pages as well. Harry grew cold as he watched Lucius put it and the transfiguration book back into Ginny's cauldron.

"Here girl take your book. It's the best your father can give you." Lucius said as he was shoving the book into the cauldron. The look of pure loathing on Lucius' face made Harry lose control.

"It's a lot better than what you could give her." Harry said to him causing everyone to look between him and Mr. Malfoy with wide eyes.

"Mr. Potter. I almost forgot you were here." Lucius said addressing Harry for the first time. "And I could give my family much more than that pathetic man ever could."

"He ain't pathetic." Harry growled out. "None of the Weasleys are. They're a much better family then you will ever be."

"You know the Potter name used to mean something." Lucius drawled. "It used to have meaning, before that father of yours married your mudblood mother."

That was it, any restraint he may have had snapped and Harry saw red. He whipped out his wand, pointing it at Mr. Malfoy before anyone could stop him. Harry just laughed as Lucius tried to hide his surprise at Harry's speed. "Think you could take me do you Potter. I suggest you don't even try before one of us ends up in hospital."

"Yes. That's the plan." Harry replied a cocky grin pasted on his face. "And I ain't planning on it being me."

"You're out of your league Potter." Lucius hissed at him.

"At least I have a league." Harry responded. "Unlike you who is a loyal Death Eater and would kiss the robes of that half blood wizard you call Voldemort. The only reason that you're not in Azkaban is that you managed to give members of the Wizengamot back handed payments."

"Prove it." Mr. Malfoy again hissed. He watched as Harry didn't say anything. Figuring that Harry had nothing on him Mr. Malfoy huffed then turned and left the store with Draco following in his wake.

"What the hell was that?" Hermione said addressing Harry.

"That was cool!" Fred and George said together.

"Yeh should've ignored him. Both you and Arthur." Hagrid said. He had entered the shop in the middle of the confrontation between Mr. Weasley and Mr. Malfoy. "That family is rotten to the core. The whole family, there's not one that ain't. Everyone knows that. No Malfoy's worth listening ter, bad blood, that's what it is. Come on now, let's get outta here."

"We need to go to Ollivander's to get Ginny's wand." Harry reminded them as they left the shop. Mrs. Weasley eyed him closely before sighing.

"Very well, come on." Mrs. Weasley muttered and headed over to the wand shop. It was obvious she didn't approve of what had just happened but she wasn't going to punish Ginny for it.

When they reached the shop only Mr. and Mrs. Weasley, Harry and Ginny went in. Sirius stayed outside with Ginny's brothers. Only Mrs. Weasley was under the illusion that this would keep everyone out of trouble.

"Ah, what a pleasant surprise." Came the voice of Mr. Ollivander, causing them all to jump. "I wasn't expecting to see you in here. But not to worry not to worry. Mr. Potter it is nice to se you again...Holly and Phoenix feather, eleven inches, nice and supple I believe. How is it treating you?"

"Very good sir." Harry replied nodding to him.

"And Mr. and Mrs. Weasley wonderful to see you. Dragon Heartstring and Willow and Unicorn Hair and Vine Wood I believe. How are your wands doing... still treating you well I hope?" he asked them.

"It does just fine." Mrs. Weasley said.

"Got no problems." Mr. Weasley shrugged.

"Ah yes and now one Ginevra Weasley." Mr. Ollivander said turning and addressing Ginny.

"The name is Ginny!" she growled out as the tape measure on the counter went to work measuring every inch of her body.

"Ginny!" Mrs. Weasley exclaimed shocked at her daughter's rudeness.

"Now, now, Mrs. Weasley she has every right to correct me. If she wishes to be called Ginny well, then that is okay." Mr. Ollivander said waving off Molly's approaching tirade and walked towards the shelves of wands. He picked one out and returned handing it to Ginny. Once Ginny grasped the wand the measuring tape fell to the floor. Ginny looked confused at it; she never even saw Mr. Ollivander check it.

"The measuring tape is just for show Ginny." Harry told her when he noticed that Ginny was looking confused at the measuring tape lying on the floor.

"Quite right Mr. Potter." Mr. Ollivander said coming back out from the shelves with a second wand. Yanking the one she had in her hand away and muttering about being not right he gave her the second one. Ginny waved it but again nothing happened. Mr. Ollivander took it back from her and went to find another wand. Yet again the wand didn't react to Ginny. This pattern continued for an hour; wand after wand Ginny tried but none were reacting to her. Harry could tell Ginny was getting more and more upset as each wand failed to react to her.

By the time they were there for an hour and a half there was only 4 wands left to try and Ginny really was upset. Although she was trying to hide it Harry could tell she was on the brink of tears. The first two wands, of the last four, didn't react to her either and Harry had a feeling neither would the other two. Leaving the shop saying that he needed some fresh air he walked out of the door and along the street until he came to the abandoned alleyway they were in earlier.

"Estelle." He called out. In a flash of fire his phoenix was hovering in front of him.



"I was just dosing back to sleep you know Harry." She said quite irritated. "So this better be important... Ginny hasn't gone and got her self lost again has she?" she suddenly asked concerned.

"No, no." Harry said.

"Then make it snappy. There is a perch next to the fire I want to get back to." Estelle replied.

"It's the middle of August!" Was Harry's shocked reply. Estelle just gave him a look clearly trying to convey her annoyance. "Okay, okay, I was wondering if I could have a tail feather."

"Well... what ever I was expecting it most certainly wasn't that." Estelle said surprised. "I'm not sure. Us phoenixes don't just give them away. What do you want it for anyhow?"

"You know how I'm buying Ginny a wand?" Harry asked her and she nodded. "We'll no wand that Ollivander has is working for her. Now you're bonded to me... that also means you're bonded to Ginny too correct?"

"Yes I was wondering if you would work that out soon. But yes, I'm bonded to Ginny too. I haven't had enough time with her to establish the mind connection you and I have, but there is a bond there." Estelle said nodding.

"Do you think because you're bonded to Ginny that maybe one of your tail feathers in a wand might react to her?" Harry asked her. "Because no other wand in Ollivander's is working."

"Oh I see now. Of course we can give it a try. When I go I'll leave a feather behind for you is that okay?" Estelle asked Harry.

"Thank you Estelle." Harry said deeply relived. "If Ginny doesn't get a wand today then she'll never live it down." Estelle nodded before flaming away. Once the fire disappeared Harry saw a feather floating down to the ground. He snatched it out of the air and rushed back to Ollivander's.

Harry walked in just in time to see Ginny give the last wand a try and yet again nothing came out of it. "I'm sorry but that is the last wand I

have." He heard Ollivander say. Harry rushed over to him cutting off any reply that might have come. He made sure his back was to the Weasleys so they couldn't see what he was doing.

"Sir I've got a phoenix feather here. Could you make a wand out of it to try for Ginny?" Harry whispered to him so no one else could hear.

"Where did you get it?" Mr. Ollivander asked amazed as he studied the feather.

"Does it matter?" Harry asked him.

"Oh well... no, no" Mr. Ollivander replied. "Which wood would I use though?"

"I'd give holly a try, eleven inches." Harry said hoping his hunch was correct. Ollivander eyed him curiously before nodding his head.

"I'll be back in about fifteen minutes." Mr. Ollivander said aloud so that the Weasleys could hear him. "If you just wish to wait here and I'll be back with a wand for Ginny."

"No, no." Mrs. Weasley said before Ollivander could leave. "We've imposed enough. There's her grandmother's wand that Ginny can use."

"No, no, no." Mr. Ollivander said outraged. "The wand chooses the wizard or witch as the case may be. Ginny would find it very hard to get good results with that wand. It's not the right wand for her; if you'll sit patiently I WILL be back with a wand for Ginny." With that Ollivander went out the back.

"What did you say to him?" Mr. Weasley asked Harry as they sat patiently.

"I just gave him an idea is all." Harry replied shrugging his shoulders and all of them looked at him curiously. Twenty five minutes later Mr. Ollivander came out with a wand that looked almost exactly like Harry's. The only difference was that this one was brown rather than blackish in colour.

"Sorry, it took so much longer than expected, I needed to figure out a few things." Mr. Ollivander said as he walked towards Ginny. "Just

give it a wave then." Mr. Ollivander said as Ginny took hold of the wand. She waved it casually not expecting anything to happen. Ginny was quite shocked and practically jumped when red and gold sparks shot out of her wand.

"Oh bravo. Finally. A wand for Miss. Weasley. That's very curious but nonetheless." Mr. Ollivander said as he wrapped it up. Ginny just smiled at him nervously, she almost looked like she was going into shock. When he handed the wand back to Ginny he whispered to her. "You've got a good friend in that Harry Potter. Don't let him go okay." Then without saying another word he accepted the money from Harry for the wand and walked to the back of the store.

"Such a strange man." Mrs. Weasley said as she picked up her bags from all the shopping she had done.

"I think that's rather an obvious statement don't you." Mr. Weasley chuckled and opened the door so they could leave. The four of them started towards the Leaky Cauldron hoping that everyone would still be there.

Harry slowed down a little bit so that he was walking with Ginny alone and no one could hear them.

"Estelle will want to hear that you're looking after that wand okay." Harry told her quietly as they walked towards the Leaky Cauldron.

"Estelle?" Ginny asked confused.

"What did you think I was talking to Mr. Ollivander about Ginny?" Harry half asked. "I was giving him a tail feather I got from Estelle when I went outside of the store. The tail feather that is in your wand Ginny, comes from Estelle."

"Comes from your Phoenix?" Ginny said in awe.

"Yes so look after it okay. That's the only tail feather she has ever given." Harry said smiling at her.

"And she did that for me?" Ginny asked again. "Why?"

"Because she likes you, silly." Harry said as they entered the Leaky Cauldron. They moved towards the fire place where the rest of the

Weasleys and Sirius were waiting for them. Ginny eyed the fire place with worry, obviously now scared due to what happened earlier.

"Ginny as long as you speak loud and clear it's going to be fine." Harry said to her.

"I ain't scarred, I'll show you." Ginny said indignantly. "But I'll let someone else go first." She hastily added causing the others to laugh and her to smile.

Once they were back at The Burrow Harry helped Ginny take her packages and her cauldron upstairs to her room. Harry had just put it down next to the bed when he saw the diary of Tom Riddle for the second time that day. It was now innocently residing at the bottom of her cauldron. After pausing for a moment he straightened up and headed towards the door.

"Thank you Harry." Ginny said as she came through the door. "And thank Estelle for me. If it weren't for her I wouldn't have this wand."

"Thank her yourself." Harry replied and yet again called Estelle.

"WHAT!" Estelle screamed in his head once she had flamed into the room.

"Ow, Estelle, think you could yell louder." Harry said out loud so Ginny could hear what they were talking about. "I just called you because Ginny wanted to say thank you." Estelle looked at Ginny and then flew over to her and landed on Ginny's shoulder. She proceeded to rub her head affectionately against Ginny and let out a contented hum. "She likes you a lot I see. I just might have competition from you for my own phoenix, Ginny." She chuckled at that and Estelle sang out in reply.

"What did she say?" Ginny asked.

"She much prefers to have you as her owner rather than me." Harry chuckled out. "I can see when I'm not wanted. I'll just leave you two girls alone. See ya Ginny."

"Thanks Harry. For everything, and thanks for coming to get me in America." Ginny said blushing slightly.

Harry just smiled. "Anytime." With that he left Ginny's room and headed downstairs, leaving the diary in Ginny's cauldron...

A/N: Hey guys next chapter for you. And it's another Big one. Don't flame me for Harry's decision. Trust in me to the fact that I know what I'm doing. Please. Also GWeasleyPotter is Now Co-Author.

Disclaimer: I Do Not own Harry Potter

Harry woke up on the morning of the first of September bleary-eyed and sleepy. He hadn't had much sleep recently but he knew why. Every time he had gone over to the Burrow he had seen Ginny writing in the diary. Of course she was hiding it from her brothers and parents well, but then again they weren't really looking for it. Thoughts of what she could be writing in it crossed his mind and he found himself wondering why she couldn't be talking to him about it rather than Tom. But Harry knew that this was what needed to happen for Ginny to fall in love with him. If she didn't her whole life could be ruined. If this failed, she may never fall for him then what would he do? She would be trapped in a marriage to someone she was only friends with. He didn't think that he could stand to see her unhappy for the rest of their lives.

Harry slowly got up out of bed and headed downstairs to find Sirius making breakfast. It was very early in the morning; in fact, it was still dark. Harry looked up at the clock to see it was five to five. Yawning Harry wondered what Sirius was doing up this early. He knew that Sirius wasn't planning to see him off at the train. Sirius had said as much the night before, which was why Harry was up and getting ready to go to the Weasleys. But being too tired to ask, neither Harry nor Sirius spoke during breakfast. The sleep they were missing out on was causing them to be awfully sluggish and way too tired to ask questions let alone generally talk. An hour later Harry found himself saying good by to his godfather and arriving at the Burrow through the floo network.

"Morning." Mrs. Weasley said as she helped Harry with his trunk. Like last year, Estelle was going to flam to Hogwarts that evening. This time however, Simon was going to accompany Harry and was wrapped around his left forearm. Harry looked up from dusting himself off to see Ginny in her PJ's sitting at the kitchen table fast asleep, a bowl of cereal lay forgotten in front of her.

"Hey sleepy." Harry said as he sat down next to her. Her head popped up wildly looking around; her confusion was evident as her eyes landed on Harry.

"You're here already." Ginny said looking at Harry in shock.

"Ginny are you nearly finished? You need to get dressed if you are otherwise we're going to be late." Mrs. Weasley said coming into the kitchen cutting off any reply that Harry may have made.

"Okay mum." Ginny said and she hurriedly got up from the table and rushed upstairs to get dressed. Harry sat back with a smile and watched the confusion of the Weasleys dashing about looking for quills and parchment. To him it was a wonderful sight; it was something that made the people around him who they were. After all, Weasleys always left the packing to last minuets... well at least the younger ones did. After some commotion and what sounded like someone falling down the stairs, Fred and George appeared at the bottom of the stairs sounding off that they were ready.

"All ready to go." Fred yelled while he sat down next to Harry.

"Yeah, hurry up you slow coaches." George yelled sitting down on Harry's other side.

"You sure you got everything?" Mrs. Weasley asked them from the door of the kitchen.

"YES mum!" They said together and Mrs. Weasley hurried off to check on the others.

"So you got your fireworks George?" Harry asked knowing the answer. George had a shocked expression on his face as he hurried out of the kitchen and up the stairs to get his fireworks.

"Stupid brother of mine." Fred said watching his brother run up the stairs to get the fireworks. "Imagine forgetting something like your fireworks. You already for this year Harry? We're going to win the quidditch cup again this year aren't we?"

"Sure." Harry said remembering the fact that quidditch was cancelled because of the attacks. This drew Harry's thoughts to the diary and Ginny and what he was doing. It needed to be done, Harry told himself. He didn't want Ginny to end up being in a loveless marriage. Ginny's life would be ruined and he refused to let that happen. "Although." Harry said as he looked at Fred's trunk. "I am wondering what you're going to be playing on..." Harry trailed off, getting Fred to notice that his broomstick wasn't with his trunk. Harry

laughed slightly as Fred ran out of the kitchen and towards the shed that kept all their brooms.

Once Fred was out of the door he noticed that Ginny was coming down the stairs fully dressed and carrying her trunk. Harry hopped up and went over and helped her carry it to the other trunks.

"Thanks Harry." Ginny said as they left it by the front door and went back into the kitchen.

"So you're awake now are you?" Harry said, causing Ginny to laugh slightly as she dropped down into her seat at the kitchen table.

"No, but that's normal I suppose." Ginny mumbled before smiling. "I'm going to Hogwarts today. What is it like? What's the lessons like? What are the professors like?" Ginny quickly asked him, causing Harry to chuckle.

"I already told you this once." Harry said smiling at her.

"I know but I want to hear it again." Ginny said leaning forward eagerly.

"Fine..." and Harry was off telling her about the ghosts and ghouls, the portraits and the lessons. Half an hour later Mrs. Weasley came into the kitchen, ending their conversation.

"You got everything Ginny?" Mrs. Weasley asked her and Ginny replied that she had. Suddenly there was a loud bang and Mrs Weasley walked out of the kitchen shouting "Fred, George!"

"So what are you most looking forward to when you get to Hogwarts?" Harry asked Ginny.

"Lots of things really." Ginny said thinking. "The lessons will be good. And I simply love quidditch. Do you think I will be allowed to watch you practices?" Ginny asked him.

"I'm not sure. I'm going to have to ask Wood." Harry told her.

"Yeah and that's if I make Gryffindor." Ginny mumbled just loud enough for Harry to hear.



"Of course you'll make Gryffindor." Harry reassured her. "I promise you. The sorting hat would be stupid to put you anywhere else."

"Yeah but we don't really know do we." Ginny said looking down at the table.

"Ginny, if the sorting hat tries to put you anywhere else just say no. Keep saying you want to go into Gryffindor." Harry told her.

"How do you know that will work?" Ginny mumbled.

"Cause it did with me." Harry said and she looked at him wide eyed. "The sorting hat wanted to put me in Slytherin, Ginny. There was no way I was going in there when your brothers were all in Gryffindor. And I know you are going to be in Gryffindor. All Weasleys are. You're a Weasley so you'll be put into Gryffindor. Don't worry about it. And like I said, if it tries something different tell it that Harry Potter says hello and wants you in there and that I'll get mad at him if he doesn't do it."

"Thank you." Ginny smiled at him.

"So I was wondering..." Harry started. He needed to plan this right, he didn't want to miss the train and coming back for the diary might make them late. So he needed to remind Ginny of it. But how was a problem because she hadn't told him about it yet. "I saw you huddled in a corner last night looking fishy. You weren't planning on any pranks were you? You know I want to be a part of it if you do."

"No. I err, well I have a diary and..." Ginny said then stopped when she realised she hadn't packed it. She rushed up the stairs to grab it.

Harry was feeling more and more guilty. 'It's what makes her fall in love with me. I don't want her to be in a loveless marriage' Harry thought over and over again, the thought was becoming a mantra, and although it didn't make him feel better it made him keep his resolve. Harry watched Ginny come down with the diary in her hand and put it in her pocket. She then came and sat right next to Harry.

"You promise not to tell anyone?" Ginny muttered as she sat back down.

"That you got a diary?" Harry asked and Ginny nodded. He took a breath before answering. "Sure Ginny, I promise."

"It's not a normal diary." Ginny muttered. "I write in it and he writes back."

"He?" Harry asked.

"Yes, his name is Tom. He's friendly and nice just like you. I was bit hesitant at first but he really is a great friend." Ginny told him.

"Ginny don't you remember what your dad used to tell us. About not trusting anything that you can't see where it keeps its brain." Harry told her.

"He's fine Harry. He's a friend. You've got nothing to worry about." Ginny assured him.

"Just be careful please. And if anything happens tell someone okay?"

"Really Harry, its fine. You're overreacting, nothing's going to happen."

"Just promise me please, Gin, if anything happens you'll tell someone."

"Fine, if anything happens I'll tell someone. But really Harry, you're overreacting nothing is going to happen." Harry could see her roll her eyes as she looked away. However Harry knew that was wrong; he knew that he wasn't overreacting. He just hoped that she kept her promise; it would make things so much easier if she did.

Harry decided to let the subject drop figuring he couldn't do any more without revealing what he knew, and that would lead to all kinds of questions. Questions he wasn't ready to answer and questions he didn't think she was ready to hear the answers to. So they sat there in silence watching the hustle and bustle of the boys packing last minuet things. Harry had resumed his internal mantra and clasped his hands under the table trying to keep his resolve when Mr. Weasley came into the kitchen. Seeing the two just sitting there Mr. Weasley dragged Harry and Ginny outside to help him add the trunks to the car.

"Don't you two breathe a word about this, to anyone. If Molly found out..." Mr. Weasley had left his sentence hanging but both Harry and Ginny knew what would happen and it wasn't pretty. While the two shuddered at what Mrs. Weasley would do if she knew, Mr. Weasley showed Harry and Ginny the trunk. It was, of course, as Harry remembered, magically resized to accommodate anything put in there. Soon enough they were in the car ready to leave, to go to King's Cross station.

"Now everyone sure they got everything?" Mrs. Weasley asked for the millionth time before they left. After everyone was finished assuring her they had not left anything they left the Burrow and started their journey to platform nine and three quarters.

The large group of redheads and one black arrived at half past ten, plenty of time to get on the platform. Ginny and Harry moved along the platform together following Mrs. Weasley as she lead the group of redheads and Harry to platforms nine and ten.

"Right Percy you first." Mrs. Weasley said and she watched Percy walk casually through the barrier. One after another Ginny's brothers slowly went through the barrier to ensure that no muggles noticed. Soon it was just Ron, Harry, Ginny, and Mr. and Mrs. Weasley.

Ron went next through the barrier with no problem and Mr. and Mrs. Weasley turned to Harry and Ginny.

"You follow us through right away you got it?" Mrs. Weasley asked anxiously.

"Yes mum." Ginny said.

Mrs. Weasley then turned to look at Harry. "Yes mum." Harry said. Harry had called her mum throughout the summer and now it was like second nature for everyone to hear him call her mum. It wasn't like he had forgotten his own mother, there was no way Harry could do that. But he thought of Mrs. Weasley in that role, and she played it so much that it just came naturally to him now. He hadn't quite gotten used to calling Mr. Weasley 'dad' but he was getting there. The duo watched as Mr. and Mrs. Weasley walked through the wall.

"Come on Harry, we need to go before mum starts to worry." Ginny said pushing her trolley towards the gate. Harry followed behind her, ready for what was to come. Just before they hit the gate Harry let go of his trolley and pulled Ginny back just in time for the trolleys to smash into the solid brick wall.

"What the..." Ginny muttered before looking at Harry. "How did you know?"

"Don't know really. I just had a feeling to stop running." Harry lied. Harry hoped that Ginny took the lie on but it didn't look like she believed him. The look she was shooting him clearly spoke of her disbelief. But luckily she let the subject drop and turned her attention toward the trolleys.

Ginny picked up her trolley and pushed it against the barrier it was still solid. "Harry what are we going to do if we can't get in?" Ginny asked him, worry lacing her voice now. "What if mum and dad can't get back to us?"

"Ginny don't worry." Harry said looking at the nearest clock. He noticed they still had ten minutes left to get onto the train. "We'll find a way." Harry walked up to the stone and patted the wall. It was STILL solid. 'How long could Dobby keep this up, how long could he keep the spell going before he tired out?' Harry wondered to himself. He closed his eyes concentrating and soon Harry could feel the magic around him. He could feel the barrier's magic hiding platform nine and three quarters. He could feel Ginny's raw magic inside her body and Harry smiled at just how powerful Ginny could become. He felt his own magic and then the magic of a small creature standing a few feet away.

"Harry, what are you doing?" Ginny asked him confused. She hadn't ever seen anyone act this way and she was starting to wonder what exactly was going on.

"Thinking." Harry replied as he tried the barrier again and it was still solid. He walked closer to where Dobby was hiding; knowing Dobby was unaware that Harry could sense him. He bent down acting like he was examining the wall. As he ran his hand over the bricks he whispered to Dobby.

"You know, I wonder what your master would say if he found out about your visit to me Dobby." Harry made sure he whispered only loud enough that the house elf was the only one who could hear him. "Mr. Malfoy wouldn't be too pleased would he?" Harry smirked as he felt Dobby quickly leave the station. When he applied pressure to his hand it slipped easily through the barrier, disappearing before his eyes. Quickly he jumped up and grabbed his trolley. Motioning to Ginny that it was ok now, they both rushed through onto the platform.

"What were you two doing?" Mrs. Weasley's voice carried over the noise of the platform and they saw her hurrying over to them.

"The gateway sealed itself mum. We couldn't get through..." Ginny started rambling and then trailed off as she looked at Harry, trying to find words to describe what had happened next.

"Well we need to get you onto the train otherwise it will be leaving without you." Mrs. Weasley said hurriedly leading the two of them over to the train. Ron's head appeared at the one of the doors as they approached.

"Where were you two?" he immediately asked as soon as they were in hearing range.

"The gateway sealed itself and we couldn't get through." Harry explained as he pushed his luggage onto the train. Ron reached out an arm and helped pull him onto it. Once Harry was safely on the train, Ron started walking away towards the compartments. Not hearing Harry's footsteps behind him, Ron turned around to see Harry still standing by the door.

"Aren't you coming?" Ron asked, causing Harry to frown.

"Have you forgotten your sister?" Harry told him as he turned back to the door and helped Ginny push her luggage on board. He struggled a bit but managed to get the trunk on the train, the whole time thinking 'what does she have in here, bricks?'. Harry looked up from the trunk and out the door to see Ginny saying goodbye to her parents. Harry felt a lurch under his feet as the train started moving.

"Ginny!" Harry shouted half hanging out the door and she turned to see the train starting to move. Wide eyed Ginny rushed towards the train trying to catch up. Keeping one hand on the inside of the door

Harry reached out with the other and grabbed her hand in his. With one swift movement he pushed his body back and pulled her up into the train. She tumbled into the train and onto Harry as he fell backwards, his hand still clasping hers.

"Thanks Harry." Ginny said while she stared down into his eyes. Suddenly realising that she was still lying on top of him she scrambled to stand. When she looked up and noticed that Ron was standing there watching them she blushed the colour of her hair.

"We can't have you being left behind now can we." Harry replied ignoring her blush and Ron's stares and got up off the floor. "Ron, have you seen Hermione or Neville about?"

"No I was waiting for you." Ron replied coming out of his momentary stupor. "They'll be around somewhere. Come on let's look for them." Turning down the hall the three of them went off looking for Hermione and Neville. They soon found both in a compartment near the back of the train. Seeing they had company, Hermione and Neville scooted over and they all squeezed into the compartment and settled down for the long ride.

"Ginny you've met Hermione, at Diagon Alley." Harry said and Ginny smiled at her. "And you met Neville too at my birthday."

"Hello." Neville said. "Bet you're excited. Do you have any idea what house you'll be in?"

"Yup." Ginny said smiling, "Gryffindor for sure."

"Well." Hermione started. "You don't know for one hundred percent sure. Just because your brothers are in Gryffindor doesn't exactly mean you will be. Sisters and brothers don't always go into the same house. Look at the Patil twins. One is in Gryffindor whilst the other's in Ravenclaw." Harry looked at Ginny and saw she was looking downtrodden and nervous by what Hermione was telling her.

"Ginny you will be in Gryffindor for sure. Just remember what I told you." Harry interrupted Hermione's rant. "Ignore Hermione. Don't worry about doing it either; Me, Ron and Neville do it all the time." Ginny couldn't help but laugh out loud at that. Hermione crossed her arms and huffed. "Ah, come on Hermione, you know I didn't mean it."

"I'm sure." Hermione replied a hint of annoyance in her voice. "Did you guys get all your homework done? Ron?" Hermione said addressing the redheaded boy.

"Huh..." Ron said looking at Hermione. "Sorry I wasn't listening what did you say?" At this Harry, Ginny, and Neville burst out laughing. Harry couldn't help but think that this proved what he had just said.

"I was talking about your homework Ronald." Hermione huffed.

"What about it?" Ron asked.

"Have you done it all?" Hermione said exasperated.

"Sure most of it." Ron said shrugging.

"Most?" Hermione asked like she couldn't believe what she heard.

"Yeah, I've still got an essay for Snape to do." Ron said shrugging. "I'll do it tomorrow evening."

"What if we have potions tomorrow Ron?" Hermione exclaimed.

"I just hope we won't." Ron told her. "Anyone up for a game of chess?"

Throwing up her hands in resignation Hermione started to read while mumbling something about boys and irresponsible and un-finished homework.

The next couple of hours saw the four of them playing chess. Hermione just sat and read The Standard Book of Spells Grade Two. First it was Harry and Ron playing with Neville cheered on Ron and Ginny cheered on Harry. Even with Harry's age and experience over Ron he still couldn't beat him. Harry just sighed in defeat when Ron's rook took Harry's queen and checkmated his king.

Next it was Neville's turn and he didn't fair much better either, although he did last longer than Harry. After watching the first half hour of the game Harry saw that Ginny wasn't paying attention any longer. She was sitting in the corner and he saw that she had the diary out and her quill was racing across the page talking to Tom.

Watching her, his heart fell; he was hoping that she wouldn't need to write to him with all of them there to talk to.

Suddenly the door to their compartment opened and in walked Malfoy and his goons.

"Oh joy." Harry muttered and Ginny gave him a funny look.

"Well, Well, Well, if it isn't the Potter gang." Malfoy sneered, looking at them. "Oh look it's your girlfriend again, Potter."

Harry just shrugged. "At least I can get one." And he winked at Ginny who just sat there shocked, unable to comprehend what Harry just said. "Unlike you who I very much doubt would ever be able to get a girlfriend."

Malfoy was lost for words, he really expected Harry to deny it. "So it's true, she really is your girlfriend?" Harry glanced at Ginny and he could tell that she was awfully confused. So Harry decided to end it.

"Sadly, no." Harry said. "However the fact is that Ginny is willing to be my girlfriend and no one is willing to be yours shows how truly, shall I say, incompetent you are to the opposite sex."

"Why you..." Malfoy said starting to head into the compartment and suddenly five wands pointed straight at him.

"Ah, Malfoy, always the one to start a fight." Harry sighed. "And here I thought that maybe you would have grown some sense over the summer. Sadly this seems not to be the case. So let me make you see sense as you don't seem to be able to do it for yourself. Currently you have yourself and your two cronies. Now they might be big muscled but when it comes to magic they're more or less worse than a squib. There is also yourself, like I said before. Not the bottom of the class, I admit, but not the top either I'm afraid. Now your daddykins might have taught you some magic over the summer but I'm afraid that might not save you. So that leaves the others in the room. You've got Hermione who is the smartest witch EVER to come to Hogwarts and that is a compliment from myself, as my mother is the only other person who scored as high as Hermione does. Funny isn't it that they're both muggle born?"



"And then you have Ron. Well he has 5 other brothers, one a curse breaker. I'm sure Bill has taught him loads of curses, as well as the Weasley twins. You know them and their practical jokes they love to play on the Slytherins all year round. And then you have Neville. Both his parents were top Aurors in their day. I'm sure some of that has rubbed off on Neville from his family blood."

"And then you have Ginny. Sweet little Ginny." Harry said looking over to her, making her blush. "You really don't want to get that red headed firecracker going. When she's mad she can cast one hell of a bat bogey hex. I'm not sure if you have ever heard of it, I think Quirrell mention it last year. But hers is twice as strong as a normal one. And she hasn't even tried it yet with her own wand. Just think, now that she has a wand attuned to her, what that curse could do."

"And then you have me." Harry added as an after thought. "Not someone you particularly want to piss off. Trust me when I tell you this. You haven't seen what I can really do. So now that you have all of that information which I'm sure you couldn't have had before you walked into the compartment. May I ask you, Draco, wizard to wizard? Do you really think it wise to come in here, wand waving, trying to assert your power over us when in reality, you don't have any?"

Everyone was looking at Harry speechless. It took a Malfoy a while before getting some words out. "You're all talk Potter." He said.

"Really?" Harry asked feigning shock. "Now I wonder if you're actually going to call my bluff or are you just going to stand there like, shall I say, a muggle?" Harry loved the reaction Malfoy took to his words. Malfoy reached for his wand, ready to cast a spell when a shot of light came from the chair opposite him and flew at Malfoy. He was thrown out of the compartment and when Harry looked out of the door he saw Malfoy on the ground, blood slowly trickling from his nose as bat bogeys flew around him. Harry turned, shocked, to look at Ginny.

"What?" she asked as she looked down. "I thought we were actually going to curse him. He was going for his wand."

Harry chuckled as he turned and walked towards Malfoy. "Let this be a lesson Malfoy. Stay. Away. From Ginny. If I ever see you harassing her you will pay. Not only will you receive her bat bogey

hex but you will get several of my hexes as well. Stay away from us and stay away from Ginny. Do not tease, do not do anything. Just stay away from her. Comprene?"

Malfoy just nodded trying to bat away several green winged and clawed blobs diving at his face. Harry smiled and turned his back on Malfoy and shut the door in his face.

"That was bloody cool!" Ron said to Ginny as Harry returned to his seat. "I'm so glad that bat bogey hex was not going in my direction. Remind me sis to never piss you off again."

"Err... yeah... sure." Ginny muttered and Harry smiled.

"Not expecting it to be that powerful hey Gin?" he asked her.

"What if I really hurt him?" Ginny asked.

"It would make it even funnier." Harry replied pride radiating off of him.

"You shouldn't be encouraging her!" Hermione told them. "She could get in trouble."

"True." Harry said nodding. "But I think Ginny would agree with me that it was worth it." Harry turned and winked at her causing Ginny to laugh out loud again.

"Argh, you're incorrigible." Hermione said.

"So they say." Harry said shrugging, sitting back down.

Soon the witch with the lunch trolley came round and Harry realised just how starving he was. He rushed to the trolley and bought what seemed like two of everything.

"That's not very good for you, you know." Hermione said eyeing all the sugary sweets.

"Of course they are." Harry replied. "You just do a spell to stop your teeth from rotting."

"Really..." Hermione said leaning forwards. "There's a spell for that. How come I have never heard of it? Which book is it in? I'm sure my parents would be pleased to hear about it."

"Well..." Harry said starting and he could see Ginny giggling in her corner. She knew Harry knew no spell like that and he was just trying to get Hermione off his back. Smiling at Ginny he thought of a way around the situation. "I'm not entirely sure. Ginny was the one who taught me it."

"Really Ginny." Hermione said looking now at the redhead in the corner. "Can you teach me it? What other spells do you know? That curse you did on Malfoy looked really good, could you teach me that too? Oh, this could be really good, you being from a wizard family I bet you know all kind of spells." Ginny shot a look at Harry which clearly told him that he was so going to be in trouble later and then started to talk to Hermione about the different spells she knew her mother used around the household.

"You know you're going to pay for that one later, don't you?" Ron whispered to him looking fearfully at his sister but trying to contain his chuckles at the same time.

"Yes." Harry replied. "Let's just hope she doesn't think it merits the bat bogey hex." Ron smiled sympathetically at him and went back to eating his lunch.

For a couple of hours they sat and talked about many things; the school year, pranks that could be pulled, quidditch and other thing they thought Ginny would enjoy at Hogwarts. But soon they felt the train slowing down.

"We'd better get changed." Hermione said. "Me and Ginny will go outside and leave you boys to change." With that, Ginny and Hermione left the compartment, leaving Harry, Neville, and Ron alone. Once they were changed they went outside of the compartment whilst Ginny and Hermione came in and took their turn.

When the train pulled up into Hogsmeade Station they all scrambled out onto the platform and joined the mass of students.

"Firs' years over 'ere. Firs' years over 'ere." Harry heard Hagrid call out. "Alright you lot." Hagrid said noticing them.

"Hey Hagrid." Ron, Neville, Hermione, and Harry said together.

"How was your summer?" He asked them.

"Fine." Ron replied.

"Yeah, but glad to be back." Harry said.

"Right you are mate." Hagrid agreed. "There's no place likes Hogwarts. Can't disagree with you there." Hagrid said smiling at them. "Now come on Ginny or you are going to miss the sorting."

Ginny walked towards where Hagrid was pointing to and noticed that the rest weren't following her.

"First years go over the lake whilst the rest of us go by horseless carriage." Harry explained when she turned to look at them. "We'll meet you at the Gryffindor table after your sorting." With that the four of them turned towards the carriages that took them up to the castle.

"How did you know it was a horseless carriage?" Hermione asked Harry as she climbed into the carriage Ron, Neville and himself were in.

"Sirius told me." Harry replied and Hermione had no reason to question that response.

Once the carriages pulled up outside the castle they got out and walked into the great hall.

"Well, well, well if it isn't ickle students again, so much fun." The crackling voice of Peeves was found. Harry smiled as he looked up to see Peeves with a pack of dung bombs in his hands.

"Peeves." Professor McGonagall's voice rang out. "Get out of here!"

"But I was just about to have so much fun!" Peeves cackled and threw a dung bomb at the crowd. Harry noticed that it was nowhere near him.

"Peeves, I'll get the headmaster!" McGonagall screeched out.

Harry watched in amusement as Peeves flew away. He swore he heard Peeves mutter something along the lines of "Always spoil my fun, prank them good I should...". At those words Harry had an idea shoot threw his head. He smiled and hoped that all parties would agree to it.

Harry and the rest walked into the great hall and towards the Gryffindor table. They sat down in their usual seats, waiting for the great hall to fill up and the sorting to begin. After a couple of minutes the doors to the great hall burst open and in came McGonagall followed by the new first years. Ginny wasn't that hard to find with her red hair. The glow from the candles made it shine and it was very easily recognisable. 'How could she only be eleven but still look really gorgeous at the same time?' Harry thought as he followed her progress along the hall and up the stairs so that she and the other first years stood in front of the whole school, waiting to be sorted. McGonagall walked away and a minute later she came back with a three legged stool and the sorting hat. She placed the stool in front of the first years and then placed the hat on top of it. Harry waited anxiously for Gideon to start. He wasn't waiting long when he saw the seam at the brim of the hat open up for a mouth and start to sing:

I welcome you to school this year,  
Familiar and anew.  
I am the Sorting Hat, who's here,  
To sort you fair and true.  
The four great houses you all know,  
I'll put you in the one.  
That sets you on your path in life,  
Until you're dead and gone.  
Gryffindor is first to be,  
A house with heart and pride.  
Where noble witch and wizard go,  
To choose the rightful side.  
Ravenclaw is next in line,  
A house of wit and smarts.  
Intellect is in demand,  
As is a clever heart.  
Hufflepuff is next to last,  
A just and lawful kind,  
They stay in turn and say yes sir,  
And keep an open mind.

Slytherin is last, not least,  
For they are a special breed.  
With wands in hand, and heads held high,  
A warning they do heed.  
So let me see your gifted mind  
To see where you ought to be  
The secrets of your hearts content,  
Are never safe from me.

Now put me on and don't be scarred

It doesn't take that long

I'll take a peek inside your head

And see where you belong.

Harry watched Ginny grow more nervous as Professor McGonagall stepped forward with the scroll which had the lists of names of the students starting new this year.

"When I call your name you will come to the front and I will place the hat on your head. Once the hat calls out your house you will then proceed to the relevant table...

"Adams, Leanne." McGonagall called out and a girl with short brown hair came out and sat on the stool. McGonagall put Gideon on her head and they waited. Not long after he called out "Ravenclaw". The Ravenclaw table clapped the loudest as she made her way over to them.

"Barkley, Stew." Harry saw a tall lanky boy walk over to Gideon. The way he walked screamed out to Harry 'pureblood', and an old wizard family at that. Harry didn't know why but he just knew what was coming next. Maybe it was the way he acted like Malfoy but Harry was not surprised when he was sorted. Gideon was only on his head for a mere few seconds before screaming out "Slytherin." Harry waited patiently as the next two students Sonia Brichson and Christopher Botts both became Hufflepuffs.

"Bradshaw, Ashley." McGonagall called out and a girl with brown hair came out of the line and sat on the stool. A couple of minutes later Gideon screamed out "Gryffindor" and the table erupted in

cheers. The next two people became Ravenclaws and then it was Colin Creevey's turn. Harry nearly laughed out loud when he saw the camera wrapped around his neck. Typical Colin. But what really surprised him, and allowed a few snorts and chuckles out, was when Collin was a mere meter from the hat he stopped lifted up his camera and took a picture of Gideon. Gideon looked astonished and wasn't sure what was going on which made Harry chuckle even more. Soon afterwards Gideon put Colin into Gryffindor and moved onto the next student.

It wasn't long and the students had dwindled down to only two and it was Ginny's turn. Ginny walked over to the hat quite nervously and sat on the stool provided. McGonagall placed the hat on her head and waited. And waited. A couple of minutes later the sorting hat still hadn't made a decision. 'What the hell is going on?' Harry wondered. Ginny had Weasley blood in her, and she was Harry's wife. She wanted to go into Gryffindor and he had profusely asked Gideon to put her in Gryffindor last year. Harry was starting to get really worried. It was then he noticed that a tear was rolling down her cheek. Harry observed that sometime in her sorting her hands had come to grab the edge of the stool and her knuckles were turning white from how hard she was squeezing them. Then Ginny shuddered and Harry knew instantly that she was crying.

Harry had had enough. He instantly closed his eyes and sought out Ginny and Gideon using his magic. He felt them there and he felt Ginny's fear. Harry located Ginny's mind and paused, thinking of what he was just about to do. He very discreetly entered her mind.

"No Miss, I don't care what you say. Slytherin is the house for you." He heard Gideon's voice.

"Please. Not Slytherin. Please I want to go to Gryffindor. My family is there. Harry is there." He heard Ginny plead. Harry could hear the frightened uncontrollable sadness in her voice. "Please I want to be with Harry."

"But your ability's prove that you belong in Slytherin. You definitely have Slytherin traits in you child. Slytherin is the house for you. I have never been wrong before." Harry heard Gideon say.

"Please I'll do anything. Please I want to be with Harry. I want to be with my family in Gryffindor." Ginny pleaded.

"I'm sorry but I have made my decision. Slytherin is the house for you." Harry heard Gideon reply and thought that now was the time to step in.

"Say that to the great hall Gideon and it will be the last thing you ever do." Harry hissed into Ginny's mind. Harry felt Ginny freeze with shock and could hear Gideon splutter uncontrollably.

"Mr. Potter what the hell do you think you're doing." He heard Gideon say at last.

"Stopping you from making the biggest mistake in your sorry excuse of a life." Harry replied. "Did I not ask you to put Ginny into Gryffindor last year when you sorted me? I'm quite handy at remembering conversations. You agreed to put her in Gryffindor. Now please do tell me why you're trying to put Ginny here in Slytherin when she belongs in Gryffindor with me and her family."

"I shouldn't have made that promise without looking at the person's mind and abilities." Gideon replied. "She belongs in Slytherin."

"Well last time I asked. Obviously that didn't work, so this time I'm telling. PUT. HER. INTO. GRYFFINDOR." Harry shouted the last few words.

"I refuse to." Gideon replied.

"Both me and you know, Gideon, that you don't have a choice. I order you, now do it!" Harry said getting angry. There was a silence for a little while before a sigh.

"GRYFFINDOR" Harry heard the hat shout out and Harry withdrew from Ginny's mind in time to see Ginny stand shakily up from the stool. Harry saw McGonagall lean in and whisper something to her. Ginny just nodded then walked towards the Gryffindor table, her eyes never leaving Harry's. Harry watched as she made her way over to them and sat down quietly next to him. With a thoughtful expression on her face she turned to look at Harry and opened her mouth to ask the question Harry knew was coming.

"Later Ginny." Harry whispered to her, stopping her in her tracks. "Not now, later."



Harry turned back to look at the front of the great hall to see "Gerry Weston." Getting sorted into Hufflepuff and then Professor McGonagall took the stool and the sorting hat away. Once McGonagall had returned to her seat Professor Dumbledore stood up. The whole hall, including the first years, instantly fell into silence.

"Welcome all to a new year. Before we are all befuddled by our excellent feast I would like to make a few notices. First years please note that the forbidden forest is strictly out of bounds." Dumbledore said. "I would also like to welcome Professor Lockhart who will be teaching the class Defence Against the Dark Arts." Throughout the great hall students, mostly witches, clapped loudly whispering to their neighbours about how wonderful he was. "I also have a notice from our caretaker Mr. Filch saying that dry start fireworks have been added to the banned list of items this year." Harry saw Fred and George a few seats down the table lean into each other and snigger. Harry knew that even if they were banned Fred and George would still use their fireworks. Heck this would give them MORE reason to use them. "Quidditch tryouts will be held on the second week of term. If anyone is interested please inform your head of house."

"Now that the important announcements are out of the way, tuck in." Dumbledore said sitting back down as food started to appear in the middle of the table.

"Wow." Harry heard Ginny mutter.

Harry leaned over to Ginny. "You think that's good. You haven't seen anything yet." He said to her and she smiled as she dug into the food. Soon they were finished with the feast and the plates that were filled with food disappeared. Dumbledore once again stood up. "I believe it is bedtime so off you trot and don't hang about." With that everyone stood up and Harry, Neville, Ron, Ginny and Hermione started walking towards the door.

"Ginny come on." Harry called out to her when Ginny went to follow the rest of the Gryffindors along a corridor. Harry, Hermione, Ron, and Neville had turned the opposite way and were waiting for her expectantly.

"What?" Ginny asked confused.

"We know a shortcut." Neville said and the five of them walked off in a different direction from the rest of the crowd. Harry led them through various passageways and hidden staircases and soon they were walking along the seventh floor corridor and up to the Fat Lady.

"Hello." The Fat Lady said. "Password, please."

"Wattlebird." Harry said and the Fat Lady swung open and let them in.

"How did you know that?" Hermione asked as they went inside the common room.

"A prefect downstairs told me." Harry lied. Truthfully he had remembered it from last time around.

"We'll I'm off to bed." Hermione told them. "We need to be ready for lessons tomorrow. You guys shouldn't be too long going to bed either."

"Yes ma'am." Harry replied, receiving a groan from Hermione.

"I'm too tired to deal with your sarcasm at the moment." Hermione said as she disappeared up the stairs.

"Come on, we should go to bed too, unless we want Hermione breathing down our necks tomorrow morning." Neville muttered as he walked towards their dorms with Ron trailing after him.

"I'll be up soon guys; I want to talk to Fred and George." Harry told them.

"Why?" Ron asked.

"That's my secret Ron." Harry replied with a grin. Too tired to argue, Ron just shrugged and went upstairs with Neville.

"I guess you want me to go too then." Ginny muttered, heading towards the stairwell Hermione disappeared up.

"Nope, you're part of this plan." Harry said grabbing her hand and leading her over to the couch near the fire.

"What is this plan?" Ginny asked.

"Let's wait for Fred and George first." Harry replied. Soon enough the portrait hole burst opened and the Gryffindors first years rolled in. Once the first years were in the common room all the other years seemed to slowly trickle in. In the commotion of all the start of year conversations it took five minutes before they noticed Fred and George. Harry quickly leapt up from the couch and pushed his way over to them.

"Hey mates, stay down here for a little while. I want to talk to you." Harry told them when he finally reached them. Confused they looked over the crowd to where Ginny was sitting and saw that she was as much in the dark as they were.

"What is it about?" Fred asked.

"You'll find out if you come over." Harry replied. Fred looked at George who just shrugged and they walked over to where Ginny was sitting. Once all four were seated, they waited patiently for everyone to go upstairs.

"Okay what's this about?" George asked after Percy gave them a shrewd look and then went upstairs.

"Well I was wondering if you three would like to join me in a prank." Harry said to them. He wore the same smile that Sirius wore when thinking of devious things.

"Well this is not what we were expecting, were we George?" Fred said.

"Not really, no." George said.

"How can we help?" Fred again spoke up while turning to look at Harry.

"Ginny you in?" Harry asked her.

"You want me to help you pull a prank?" Ginny asked nervously.

"Yup." Harry replied. Then she hit him on the arm.

"Prat!" she said smiling. "I'm always up for a prank. Why on earth did you feel like you had to ask?" Harry smiled at that.

"Peeves." Harry shouted out and to the surprise of Ginny and the twins Peeves popped into existence in front of him.

"You rang!" Peeves crackled.

"I was wondering if you would like to help us with a prank Peeves." Harry told him.

"Do I have a choice Harry?" Peeves asked.

"Of course, but I would be a little upset if you did turn your back on a good prank. Word might just get around." Harry warned.

"You know Peevesy, Harry." Peeves said in a sing-song voice. "I'll do anything for a good prank."

"Wait, since when does Peeves listen to you Harry?" Fred asked confused.

"It's a secret mate. One I hope you three will keep." Harry said looking at Fred, George and Ginny. All three of them nodded.

"Right so here is what I had planned..." Harry started.

An hour latter after lots of discussion Fred and George disappeared up to bed and Peeves disappeared through the wall. They had thankfully worked out the kinks to the prank, and everyone knew what their part was going to be. Ginny waited a little to make sure the twins were out of earshot before rounding on Harry.

Before he knew what was happening he felt Ginny's arms wrap around his neck, pulling him into a massive hug.

"Thank you." Ginny whispered gently. She sounded as if she was on the verge of tears again, and that was defiantly weird for her.

"For what?" Harry asked. He was starting to wonder what was up since Ginny hardly ever even came close to crying.

"You know what!" Ginny replied. "How did you do it? I mean one minute he was putting me into Slytherin and then I hear your voice in my head! Can you hear my thoughts or something?"

"No." Harry replied instantly, and Ginny looked at him confused. "Well..." Harry continued. "Only if I concentrate really hard I can. But please don't tell anyone. And I only did it once. I will never do that again. You just looked so upset. I actually saw you crying. I wanted to help."

"So can you hear my thoughts now?" Ginny asked.

"No Ginny." Harry said. "I told you. I only did that once. And I will never ever do it again. Someone's thoughts are private. They should belong to only them. I swear on my magic that I will never do that again to you."

"Thank you." Ginny said yawning. "But do you think that maybe... I really do..."

"You belong in Gryffindor." Harry told her sternly, putting his hand on her shoulder, sensing where she was going with the sentence. "No where else Ginny. You belong in Gryffindor."

"You really think so?" Ginny asked.

"I wouldn't have said it if I didn't Gin." Harry told her.

"What if you're wrong?" Ginny asked again she was starting to look really worried now.

"I'm not." Harry simply replied, hugging her tighter. "You are where you belong, Ginny. Never think otherwise okay."

"Thank you." Ginny whispered. "Thank you so much."

"Don't mention it. I just made sure you were where you belong. Nothing more." Harry said.

"I'm going to bed." Ginny muttered. "See you in the morning?"

"Of course" Harry said. "Where else would I go?"

With that Ginny walked up the stairs to her new dorm. After watching Ginny disappear, Harry turned and went up the boys staircase. He entered his room to find all of his roommates fast asleep. Harry went over to his trunk, grabbed the invisibility cloak and the marauders map and then returned back down to the common room. He needed to talk with Dumbledore tonight. So rather than going to bed as he wished, Harry dragged himself out of the common room and towards Dumbledore's office.

-oOoOoOo-

Harry reached the headmaster's office twenty minutes later. He couldn't believe how long it took but then again he had run across Snape, Filch and two prefects. Once getting there he realised his mistake as he could have just called Estelle. 'That's what tiredness does to you.' Harry thought sighing. Slowly and tiredly he stepped onto the spiral staircase, glad for the fact that it moved him upwards on its own. Once he got to the door he knocked gently. He wasn't sure if Dumbledore was still up.

"Come in." came the voice of the headmaster and Harry gingerly walked into the room. Inside the office he noticed Dumbledore was sitting in his chair behind the desk and Sirius was standing near the window.

"Harry what a pleasant surprise." Dumbledore said greeting him. "Now I know you didn't tell me last time, but that's the second time you managed to come to my office without a password. I have to tell you Harry, I am really intrigued into finding out how." Dumbledore finished with a twinkle in his eye.

"And as I told you last time Albus." Harry replied. "It is one of my various secrets I am not, as yet, willing to give out."

"Pity." Albus said nodding.

"What are you doing here Sirius?" Harry said, turning his attention to his godfather.

"Sirius here was just updating me on the Horcrux hunt." Dumbledore explained to Harry and suddenly Harry was wide awake.

"Really." Harry said eagerly sitting up in the chair rather than slouching. "How is it going?"

"Very Well." Sirius said. "As I am the heir of the Black line it was rather easy for me to get into Grimmauld Place." As he said that Dumbledore took out the famous golden locket of Slytherin.

"It has already been destroyed and now it's just a golden necklace." Dumbledore told Harry as he placed it on the table.

"I also collected Gaunt's ring." Sirius said, causing Harry to quickly look at Sirius's hands. "By the place you are looking you remember about the curse on it."

"Yeah but then how come your hand isn't..." Harry started.

"Dead?" Sirius finished for him. "When you grow up in a family like mine Harry you learn to look for everything."

"But how come you recognised something like that but not Dumbledore." Harry asked.

"Harry?" Dumbledore asked confused.

"Last time around it was you who went and found Gaunt's ring." Harry explained. "And it cursed your hand. It was literally dead. No chance of getting it back to normal. So how come that didn't happen with Sirius?"

"You knew about that curse and didn't warn me!" Sirius said outraged.

"If you told me that you were going after Gaunt's ring, I would have!" Harry responded "How was I meant to know."

"Fine." Sirius said grumpily. "I was looking for it that's why. When you grow up with a family like mine you learn to look for everything! That curse was one of my dad's favourites."

"So you got the Ring and the Locket. Any others?" Harry asked.

"Not yet." Sirius said

"Understood." Harry said nodding. "So which one are you going after next?"

"The cup." Sirius answered. "It's in the muggle orphanage so it is going to be a little difficult, but it should be okay."

"And then there is the diary." Dumbledore said. "I seem to remember you saying you would be able to destroy it this year. So where is it?"

This was the part Harry wasn't looking forward too. What if they didn't understand? "The diary is currently here at Hogwarts..." Harry started.

"Good, so we should be able to destroy it within the week." Sirius said smiling.

"Not really..." Harry said.

"Harry what aren't you telling us?" Albus asked him.

"Well I never told you exactly what the diary does. I just said the diary is a Horcrux..." Harry started.

"Then please explain." Dumbledore said curiously.

Harry took a deep breath and plunged in. "The diary holds a sixteen year old version of Tom Riddle. Someone writes in the diary and Tom, as his sixteen year old self, writes back." Harry started looking at Dumbledore. Would he connect that Riddle was sixteen when the chamber was opened. Taking another breath he plunged on. "If they write to him long enough and give him enough information it will allow Tom to get enough energy to... well... posses them." Harry saw Dumbledore's eye's narrow. "Once he posses them he will force them to open the Chamber of Secrets and set a basilisk loose on muggle-born students."

"Why am I getting the distinct impression that you want this to happen!" Dumbledore said coldly.

"The person that has the diary. The person that is possessed and forced to attack people... Well it's Ginny." Harry said quietly shifting his gaze to the floor.



"Sorry..." Sirius said. "But I just got the idea that you want Ginny to be possessed by Voldemort, and be forced to attack students!"

Harry didn't say a word. He just nodded his head.

"Ginny. Your future wife, the love of your life and you're going to let her go through this!" Sirius shouted sounding exasperated. "What are you thinking?"

"I want her to love me." Harry explained quietly, his eyes shifting from Sirius to Dumbledore. "Me saving her from the Chamber of Secrets. It's what makes her fall in love with me. I don't want her to be in a loveless marriage." Something in Dumbledore's eye's told Harry he'd figured something out.

"Then she won't marry you Harry. I know you love her and everything, but to love is to learn when to let go." Sirius said.

"She's already married to you isn't she?" Dumbledore interrupted. Harry looked at the old wizard sitting behind his desk and nodded.

"How did you know?" Harry asked.

"The school registry. Where it comes up telling me what wizards to send the letters to. Her name came up as Ginny Potter." Dumbledore explained. "I managed to change it to Ginny Weasley for you. But her name was Ginny Potter on the registry. It just occurred to me why it was that way."

"You're right. She is my wife now." Harry explained. "And there is no way to get a divorce. It's either do this and have her be in love with me...be in love with the person she's married too. Or don't and risk the chance of her being in a loveless marriage for the rest of her life. I don't want that for her. I didn't come back in time just to ruin her life like that."

Sirius and Dumbledore exchanged glances. "Harry we don't like this one bit." Sirius said. "What do you think will happen when Ginny finds out that you let her do this? Do you really think she'll still love you?"

"I know she will be upset when she first finds out. But once I explained everything to her. Once I tell her about everything. She might understand." Harry said.

"She might not." Sirius replied.

"True. But still. She'll definitely be upset but I think maybe she can forgive me once she learns I did it out of love." Harry continued to argue.

"You really think so?" Sirius asked gently. Harry just nodded. "Well she is your wife. If anyone knows her best it's you."

"Does this mean you're going to let this happen? You're going to let me do this?" Harry asked.

"I don't agree with what you are doing Harry." Sirius said. "But I do understand and yes I will back you. I just hope you know Ginny as well as you say."

Harry looked over to Dumbledore, hoping that he would give his permission for this.

"You do know what you are asking of me Harry?" Dumbledore said. "You are asking me to give the go ahead of attacks that will harm my students. They will be petrified Harry."

"Not many." Harry argued.

"What happens when these attacks don't stop?" Dumbledore asked. "I will surely be seen as unfit to be headmaster anymore."

"You come back." Harry said starting to sound distressed. He was so afraid that they wouldn't let this happen. He didn't know how he would manage things if they didn't. "When Ginny is taken down into the Chamber the Governor's ask you to come back."

"So not only are you asking me to put my students in danger but risk losing my job too?" Dumbledore asked gently.

"There is no risk. I've been through this before. They get petrified sure. But no one gets seriously hurt and you come back. After Ginny is taken down into the Chamber the governors ask you to come

back. Something about not wanting to suspend you in the first place."

"Not wanting to..." Sirius muttered confused.

"This is all set up by Lucius Malfoy." Harry explained. "He's literally killing two birds with one stone, or trying to anyhow. He removes Dumbledore as headmaster and people learn that Mr Weasley's daughter is attacking muggle-born students. So the muggle protection act Mr Weasley is trying to put through....

"Fails." Sirius finished for him. "That right stinking bastard."

"But it doesn't work." Harry explained. "No one gets hurt, just petrified. Dumbledore comes back at the end of the year. Mr Weasley's act does go through, and next year everything goes back to normal."

"You really want this to happen don't you Harry?" Dumbledore asked.

"Albus, she's my wife, is it really too much to ask for your own wife to love you." Harry was starting to sound distressed again. Both men could see the fear clearly in his eyes. "I came back in time to change many things but not the fact that Ginny falls in love with me. Please Albus. I'm not sure what I would do if I lost her again. Losing her to death is one thing. But losing her because she doesn't love me, I don't think I could handle that.

Dumbledore sighed and took off his glasses, cleaning them before putting them back on. "You promise me no one will get seriously injured?"

"They don't Albus." Harry said trying to fight down the hope the headmaster gave him at hearing those words.

"You really want to do this?" Dumbledore asked again.

"Yes." Harry said yet again.

"Then I suppose, as you're the person who came back in time, it is up to you what happens. But listen to me now. If any one of my students gets hurt..."

"They don't." Harry said cutting him off. "I promise. They get petrified. But reawakened at the end of the year. No one gets hurt."

"Then..." Dumbledore said sighing. "I won't get in your way. But please note, I don't like this, I think you're making a big mistake."

"I understand." Harry said nodding. "Believe me, I understand Albus."

AN: And it's another chapter done for you have fun reading.

Disclaimer: I Do Not Own Harry Potter.

Harry leaned back into his favourite chair next to the fire, the Marauders Map lying on his lap as he watched the dots of Fred and George Weasley hurry about the kitchen of Hogwarts. The sun had yet to peek over the horizon so the grounds and the castle were still covered in darkness. Harry's eyes wandered off to the sixth floor and the prefects bathroom where the name Ginny Potter was hustling about casting the charms they agreed to last night, to prank Percy. Peeves was in the dungeons setting up the prank for Snape that Ginny thought up. Harry shuddered at the thought, and hoped that she would give him a chance to explain his actions before she went off at him. He might not live to explain everything if she did not.

Unfortunately, Harry could not use the Marauders Map around other people anymore. He had told the others that he left it at Potter Manor because he could not find it. The reason for this was that Ron, Neville, the twins, and Ginny would all want to borrow it if they knew he had it. Last year that would have been okay. However, Harry did not really want to imagine what their reaction would be when they came to see that Ginny's surname was Potter and not Weasley. He wasn't even planning to tell them anything about the future. The only other person that he was ever going to tell was in fact Ginny herself...when she was ready to hear it. However, at the present time she wasn't. She was still so young, and she did not possess the perspective needed to understand why he did what he did. 'No,' Harry would tell himself, 'even she admitted that she didn't understand me until after this year. She's not ready to hear it but she will be... soon I hope.'

Harry heard the portrait opening and he hurriedly stuffed the map inside his bag. Through the portrait hole came Fred and George. "Any problems?" Harry asked them as they sat down on the sofa opposite him.

"Not particularly." George replied.

"Unless you count the house elves not wanting us to leave." Fred said smiling cheekily.

"Apart from that?" Harry asked.

"All ship-shape and ready to go captain." Fred and George said together while mock saluting.

"Now where did you hear that saying? That is a muggle saying isn't it?" Harry asked as he looked at them with suspicion.

"That it is, but how did you know that?" Fred asked now looking at Harry with the same suspicion.

"Tell you what. I'll keep where I heard it from a secret and you can keep where you heard it from a secret." Harry said realising that he could get himself in a pickle if he didn't curb their curiosity right away.

Fred and George looked at one another then nodded. "Deal."

Five minutes later the portrait hole opened again, this time seemingly of its own accord, and then closed. The boys did not have to wait long before Ginny appeared in the room, smiling ear to ear having just pulled off Harry's invisibility cloak.

"All right there Ginny?" Harry asked her. "Everything went okay?"

"Percy won't know what hit him." Ginny smiled at him before sitting down next to him. They only had to wait for another five minutes before Peeves flew through the wall, cackling like mad.

"Snivellus is going down." Peeves cackled after joining them.

"You know I wish you would tell us what you've got planned Peeves." Fred said.

"Yeah, maybe we can swap techniques of pranking." Nodding, George added.

"A master of the art never reveals their secrets." Peeves continued to cackle. "And you don't need pointers. You're already really good."

Harry looked up at Peeves. "Merlin, was that a compliment? From you, Peeves?"

"What, no." Peeves said straight away. The look on his face was priceless. Harry thought that if ghosts could eat, Peeves would be suspected for stealing from the cookie jar.

"Harry, what have you done to him?" Fred asked aghast.

"Yeah you tamed him." George finished.

"I have not!" Harry replied indignantly. "We just watch out for each other."

"Harry was good to old Peeves. So old Peeves is good to Harry." Peeves said.

"Man, Harry." Ginny said shaking her head. "What I wouldn't do to be able to control Peeves."

"I might take you up on that offer." Harry smiled at her. "So be careful what you say."

Ginny smiled back at Harry. "What have you got in mind?" then she winked at Harry.

"Oh err..." Harry was perplexed, he felt as though someone just pulled a carpet out from under his feet. Since when did Ginny start to flirt outright, and not even blush? Fortunately, he was saved when they heard footsteps coming down from the boy's dormitories. Peeves rushed out of the common room via the nearest wall before Ron and Neville came into view walking down the last few stairs.

"Morning." Ron said then looked at the four of them seated around the fire suspiciously. "What are you four up to?"

"Nothing" They all said at once. All looking as innocent as possible.

"Right." Neville said. "Should we be worried?" He asked.

"Depends." Ginny said smiling her most innocent smile.

"On what?" Ron demanded. He knew that smile all too well.

"On whether you go to the prefects bathroom on the seventh floor or not." Ginny said shrugging one shoulder nonchalantly. "If you don't you've got nothing to worry about."

"I don't, but I know for a fact that Percy does." Ron said.

"Oh dear. What a pity." Ginny replied her voice dripping in sarcasm.

"What did you do?" Neville asked worriedly. He had been around the twins enough to know that when a Weasley got that look in their eye you better watch out. Frankly though he may not like Percy all that much he feared for the boy right now.

"Just wait and find out." Fred said smiling playfully.

"We wouldn't want to spoil the surprise now would we?" George asked incredulously.

"What surprise would that be?" Hermione's voice rattled over to them as she came down the girls' stairway.

"Well it wouldn't be a surprise if we told you, would it?" Harry said more than asked, getting up and heading down towards breakfast.

Soon they were all sitting down at the Gryffindor table eating breakfast and waiting for the great hall to fill up. Ron, Hermione, and Neville kept glancing at Harry, Ginny and the twins, trying to work out what was going on. However, trying was the important word in that sentence because once the great hall was full and the time had come for the prank to start, they still had not managed to work it out. Harry had just finished his cereal when there was a loud bang near the teachers table.

Harry looked up and bit back a laugh. Fred and George had definitely outdone themselves. The teachers' clothes had changed, Dumbledore was now wearing robes fit for a king and on top of his head, rather than a wizard's hat, was now a crown. McGonagall sitting next to him also wore a crown and her clothes had changed to those fit for a queen.

Harry looked along the staff table to see that all the teachers now wore clothes that made them look like lords and ladies, well all of them apart from one. Snape was not dressed up smartly. He did not even look like a lord. Instead, he wore what looked like red PJ's that had yellow dots all over them. He had a floppy hat with bells on the ends of the four corners. Harry just about lost it; Snape was dressed as the Joker, the entertainer of the court.



There was suddenly a loud bang from the Slytherin table and everyone turned to look at them to find they had also changed. Now rather than looking human, they now had a face of a donkey with the long nose and ears. Malfoy looked furious. He opened his mouth to complain but rather than a voice coming out, out came a rather loud "eeywhore." The icing on the cake was when everyone noticed his rather long tail. All the Slytherins had them.

The whole hall burst out laughing and Harry gladly joined in with them until there was another bang at the Hufflepuff table. Harry turned to see them all dressed in green, ivy, and roots. They were dressed as plant people. The hall was filled with laughter as another bang went off, this time at the Ravenclaw table. Once the smoke cleared, people let out an even bigger howl of laughter when they saw the Ravenclaws. They looked liked muggle cartoon scientists with big brains in glass jars on top of their heads.

Lastly, there was a bang at the Gryffindor table. After getting his composure, Harry looked down at himself and grinned. He was dressed as a knight. Looking across the table at Ginny his heart leapt to his throat. She looked amazing. She wore a blue dress and a golden necklace around her neck. She looked incredible, especially with her red hair flowing down over her shoulders. On top of her hair, she wore a small hat that came to a point. At the point, a couple of strands of fabric were sewn into it, letting the fabric flow down her back. Harry was sure he had not seen her look more beautiful since their wedding.

After a couple of minutes of joyful laughter there was one extra-loud bang and everyone turned back into their ordinary robes. Dumbledore stood up from the heads table and the laughter died down quickly. He was just about to speak when there was a final loud bang near the ceiling and everyone turned their heads to the ceiling to find a floating ribbon. The ribbon started moving forming words so that the school assembled could read:

The Ghosts of the Marauders would like to thank everyone for their participation in this Wonderful prank.

Tweedle Dee and Tweedle Dum would like to say that everyone looked spiffing this morning and they cannot wait until next time.

Wild-Fire would like to add that Professor Joker, aka Snape was a hoot to pull off and maybe now he will loosen up a bit. Nevertheless, she resigns that she is properly asking a little bit too much.

Our resident Ghost would like to add that he had so much fun pulling this prank off that he might not be able to wait until next time.

Finally, I, Prince of Mischief, would like to praise you all for your ability to see the funny side of your humiliation. It means we can humiliate you more often. Have fun and don't get up to too much mischief. That's our job.

With that, the ribbon vanished leaving the hall in absolute quiet. Harry looked at the table to see most of the teachers were confused. However, the ghostly white face of Professor Snape was staring right at Harry. Harry turned to look at McGonagall to see her have a knowing smile and Dumbledore's twinkle shone brightly for all to see. It was then, when Harry's eye caught Dumbledore's, that Dumbledore winked at him. Standing up Dumbledore addressed the rest of the school.

"I would like to thank The Ghosts for an excellently pulled prank. Unfortunately pranking is against school rules so therefore points should be deducted. However, as we have absolutely no clue as to whom these four pranksters are, neither points nor detentions will be handed out. And now, off to classes." Once Dumbledore had concluded, he sat back down and proceeded to watch his students finish their breakfast while many discussed the prank that had just occurred. Harry and the others stayed sitting at their table and waited for McGonagall to bring their timetables to them. However, Snape got to them first.

Sneering at the seven of them, Snape said. "You think that was funny do you? To prank a teacher? That expulsion that is. So unfortunately Potter you will not be going to class. In addition, neither will the other six of you. You all will be expelled for this."

"On what grounds?" Harry asked kindly.

"Haven't you been listening Potter!" Snape sneered at him. "For this prank that's what!"

"Well the fact that there are seven of us, and only four pranksters, how do you determine which of us are the pranksters, if any are?" Harry replied.

"I know it was you Potter." Snape said. "And there might have only been four pranksters but do you honestly expect me to believe all seven of you didn't know of it. The Weasley twins have been pranking for years! Moreover, you four are as close as you can be. Now Miss. Weasley has come along to join your little group. I think it's just a shame that she'll be sent home having only been here for a day."

"That's enough Severus." Professor McGonagall said coming up from behind him. "You have no proof that it was these students. No one will be expelled. Especially not all seven of them. It was clearly only four people. And we definitely have no clue that it was any of these students." She had come to hand out the timetables.

"Headmaster." Snape snapped and Harry looked toward the staff table to see Professor Dumbledore walking towards them. "I want Potter and his friends expelled for this prank!"

"May I ask for the evidence you have that proves Mr. Potter and his friends are the cause of this prank." Dumbledore asked looking at the potions master. "Plus, even if you did, it wouldn't merit expulsion."

"Ghosts of the Marauders!" Snape said icily.

"I can't be held responsible for something my father wishes to do." Harry said trying very hard not to smile.

"This was not your idiotic father, Potter!" Snape fumed turning back to him. "This was you and your friends!"

"Severus." Dumbledore said coldly. "That will do. You have no proof that either Harry or his friends were the cause of this prank. So please leave so that McGonagall can finish giving out their timetables." Snape looked like he was going to explode but stalked off out of the hall and towards the dungeons. McGonagall handed them their timetables and Harry and the others rushed out of the hall.

Once in the entrance hall, Ginny and the twins rounded on Harry. "Wild-Fire! You nicknamed me Wild-Fire!" she growled out.

"I thought it fit." Harry mumbled under her gaze.

"Who are Tweedle Dee and Tweedle Dum?" Fred asked.

"There from a muggle carton called Alice in wonderland." Hermione answered straight away. "They are a mischievous pair of twins."

"Oh so it suits us." George said now smiling. "I like them then, don't you George?"

"Definitely." Fred replied.

"Never mind about that." Ginny interrupted. "You might like your nickname but I don't like mine. And what was with Prince of Mischief! Since when are you a Prince! You need to be good looking to be a prince!"

"Hey!" Harry said pretending to outraged. "I know someone in this very room who thinks I'm good looking!"

"No!" Ginny countered crossing her arms across her chest. "I have feelings for you. I said nothing about you being handsome or good looking."

"Hah hah!" Harry replied. "Very funny." Ginny smirked in reply.

"So it was you four!" Hermione shouted at them.

"Louder Hermione I don't think people in England heard you!" Harry hissed at her.

"You four could have got expelled." Hermione said ignoring what Harry said.

"They don't expel you for pulling a prank." Harry replied dismissively. "Snape was just overacting. That was pretty funny guys." He said directing the last sentence towards the twins.

"Thank you oh Prince of Mischief." They said together.

"See Gin. They think I'm a prince." Harry said.

"Yes but they're the twins." Ginny replied.

Harry looked over to them and nodded his head. "Good point."

"Hey!" They said together.

"Okay you can do this later; we've got classes to get to." Hermione said.

"Why is it always classes?" Ron moaned.

"Because, they're important!" Hermione shot back at him.

"Of course they are!" Neville said agreeing trying to hide the sarcastic tone in his voice. "How could you not know that one?" he asked Ron.

"Shut it you." Ron hissed out.

"Don't talk to him like that Ronald." Hermione told him off.

"Since when did you become my mother?" Ron snapped back.

"Will you two shut up?" Ginny shouted at them.

"Thanks." Harry said to her. "You don't know how annoying it is when they start doing that."

"Harry, he's my brother." Ginny reminded.

"Yeah but dealing with your brother is nothing like dealing with both Ron and Hermione." Harry told her. "Trust me on this."

Ginny just shrugged. "I guess you know them better than me." She mumbled.

"Trust me Gin, that's a good thing." Harry whispered to her and Ginny tried to stifle a laugh.

"Harry we need to get going or we're going to be late for Herbology." Hermione shouted out.

"Ma'am, yes ma'am!" Harry shouted back while mock saluting.

"Argh!" Hermione screamed out before turning and walking through the front doors and onto the grounds where the greenhouses were.

"Does she do that often?" Ginny asked.

"All the time." Neville said shaking his head. "All the time."

"Don't worry you should get used to it." Harry said.

"Should?" Ginny asked puzzled.

"Yeah we've known her for a year now and we're not even used to it." Ron replied, causing Ginny to laugh aloud again.

"I better head to class." Ginny said. "Don't want to be late on my first day." She added heading up the stairs.

"Yeah Hermione will have our guts for garters if we're late." Neville added. Therefore, the three boys headed out of the entrance hall and onto the grounds towards the greenhouses where a group of second year students were hanging about waiting for Professor Sprout.

Professor Sprout turned up two minutes later. "Greenhouse three today chaps." She called out cheerily as a murmur went around the students. Being only first years last year, they had only ever worked in greenhouse one.

Professor Sprout took out a key from her pocket and unlocked the door. They walked through the door to the greenhouse to find some exotic and dangerous looking plants. "Be careful when you're walking by these. We do not want you lot in the hospital wing this early in the school term now do we?"

Once everyone was around the main table that was in the middle of the greenhouse Professor Sprout continued to talk.

"Today we will be re-potting mandrakes; can anyone tell me the properties of the mandrake?" Professor Sprout asked. As always, Hermione's hand shot up into the air.

"Mandrake, or Mandragora, is a powerful restorative." Hermione recited from 'One thousand magical herbs and fungi'. "It is used to return people who have been transfigured or cursed to their original state."

"Excellent. Ten points to Gryffindor." Professor Sprout said to Hermione before continuing. "The mandrake forms an essential part of most antidotes. It is also, however, dangerous. Who can tell me why?"

Once again, Hermione's hand shot up. However, this time so did Neville's. "Yes Mr. Longbottom." Professor Sprout addressed him.

"Who ever hears the cry of a mandrake dies." Neville said quietly.

"Quite right Mr. Longbottom. However, as these mandrakes are only babies, their cry will not be fatal. Nevertheless, it will knock you out. So everyone grab a pair of earmuffs and securely place them over your ears. It would be such a shame if some of you would have to visit the hospital wing so early on in the year." Professor Sprout said and there was a rush to get a blue pair of earmuffs rather than pink.

Once the earmuffs were in place over their ears, Professor Sprout pulled a plant out of the soil to reveal the deformed looking baby that was the mandrake, balling its lungs out. She promptly placed it into the larger pot that she had grabbed from under the table and plopped the mandrake into it, pouring damp dragon dung compost over the top of him. After she had made sure that it was safely in the soil, she gave them all the thumbs up and they took off their earmuffs.

"So as you see it isn't a very hard job to do, four to a tray please and the pots are over there. Make sure your earmuffs are securely on and I will get your attention when it is time to clear up." Professor Sprout explained and the rest of the lesson was spent re-potting the mandrakes.

After Herbology they had transfiguration where they had to transfigure some beetles into coat buttons. Harry, of course, now that everyone knew he could do magic did not have to worry about acting stupid. Nevertheless, he did wait until Ron had managed it before successfully changing his into a coat button. Of course,

Hermione, who managed it after only the second try, had by the end of the class several coat buttons. A fact that she shared with everyone in ear shot whilst they were at lunch.

Hastily trying to change the subject, Harry asked Ginny, who had joined them in the great hall, how her lessons were going. Soon Ginny was excitedly telling them all about her lessons and how great they were. She had transfiguration first and then had charms before lunch. "And now I've got potions." Ginny said smiling.

Harry looked at her as if she was mad. Which Harry thought she probably was but he loved her all the same. "Let me get this straight, Potions and smiling? Why are you smiling about potions and Snape? Is it only me or do those two things not go together?"

"Normally they don't. But you know what our resident ghosts' job was last night" Ginny said smiling quiet wickedly now.

"Ah... of course, how could I forget?" Harry said understanding. "Still wish he told us what he did."

"Well it obviously hasn't happened yet." Ginny told him. "Which means it's going to happen this afternoon. This means I get to watch it first hand."

"Damn it. You always get spoiled." Harry moaned out.

"Yes I do. And you better get used to it." Ginny replied with just a hint of smugness. Harry couldn't help but smile in response. He really didn't mind Ginny getting spoiled, especially since it was usually him that was doing the spoiling. Besides what better way could there be for her to have her first potions lesson, but to start it off with a prank on their most disliked professor.

"Who's your resident ghost?" Ron asked.

"Yeah, you haven't told us that yet." Neville added.

"Which ghost do you know that loves to pull pranks?" Harry asked before taking a mouthful of food.

"How are we meant to know?" Ron said confused.



"Ron, you really can be dumb sometimes." Hermione said rolling her eyes.

"If you're so smart then you tell us." Neville said to her.

"You seriously can't think of a ghost, any ghost, or shall I say poltergeist that likes pranks?" Hermione asked shocked.

"No..." Ron said thinking. Harry just shook his head, not believing that Ron could be so dense. 'Was he really this dense the first time or was I just as oblivious?' Harry could not help himself thinking.

"Peeves!" Neville nearly shouted out startling Harry from his thoughts. Harry took a quick look round and was glad that no one had heard him.

"What is it about secrets? Moreover, you three shouting them out as loud as you can?" Harry whispered hotly to them. "First Hermione this morning and now you."

"Sorry." Neville whispered. "So Peeves is your resident ghost?"

"How could he not be?" Ginny whispered back while cocking an eyebrow and looking at them incredulously.

"Good point." Ron muttered.

"Yeah, we thought we actually needed a ghost if we're going to be called Ghosts of the Marauders." Harry said shrugging.

"Lunch is nearly over and I want to get a good seat." Ginny said. "I'll see you at tea."

"Don't get there too early otherwise Snape might suspect you." Harry warned her.

"Have you forgotten that he already does?" Ginny replied. "He won't find any proof that it was me. Mostly because it wasn't."

"Don't you want to see whether you managed to prank Percy yet?" Harry asked her.

"I checked before coming to the great hall. The charms are still there so it means Percy hasn't visited yet." Ginny explained. "See you at tea." With that, she was gone.

"What do we have this afternoon?" Neville asked.

"Defence against the Dark Arts." Hermione said looking at her timetable before Ron snatched it away from her.

"Why have you circled all of Lockhart's lessons in red hearts?" Ron said disgusted.

"Hermione?" Harry asked confused looking at her flushed face. "Didn't you listen when I told you about him being a fake?"

"Well, you've got no solid proof." Hermione said snatching her timetable back. "And whether he's a fake or not doesn't make him any less handsome." Harry heard a quiet retching noise coming from where Neville was and Harry tried desperately not to laugh.

Harry, Hermione, Ron, and Neville went into the courtyard after they finished. Harry had no idea why Ginny wanted to get to potions this early but he gave up trying to figure out the female mind a long time ago. After a couple of minutes of talking, he looked up to see Colin Creevey staring at him, camera in hand.

"Alright there Harry, I'm Colin Creevey." Colin said excitedly. "I'm in Gryffindor just like you guys. I was wandering if I could have a picture to prove I met you. I mean I read all about you. About how you survived you-know-who's attack. And a boy in my dormitory said if I develop my pictures in the right potion they'll move!" Harry did not think Colin could get anymore excited after that. How wrong he was. "It's brilliant here isn't it. Who would have guessed that all the odd stuff I could do was magic! I was awfully surprised when I got my Hogwarts letter. You see, my dad's a milkman, so he could not really believe it either. That's why I am taking loads of pictures of the school to send back to him. And it would be really cool if I could have a picture of you, you know to prove that I met you. Then, if it is possible, you could maybe sign it?"

"Signed photos? Your giving out signed photos Potter?" the drawl of Malfoy's voice was heard saying. "Line up everyone line up, Harry

Potter's giving out signed photos!" he shouted as Harry spotted his face in the crowd.

"No I'm not!" Harry shouted back. "Sorry Colin but I don't like publicity. Why should I like being famous for the fact my parents died and I did not." That caused Colin to lower his camera, a strange look on his face.

"I never thought of it like that." Colin said quietly.

"Yeah the books kind of left that stuff out. Now if you'll excuse me." Harry said walking away.

"Ah, shame you aren't going to do signed photos. Weasley might need it so his family can buy some food rather than starve. Did you see how thin his sister is?" Draco drawled.

"Did you not listen to me when I warned you to stay away from her?" Harry growled out.

"But I'm not anywhere near her Potter." Draco replied. "I guess you need those glasses fixed. Which also must mean you can't see what you're writing when you go to sign the photos..."

"Signed photos?" Interrupted the voice of the last person he wanted to hear. Fate seemed to have a knack of hating him. Lockhart came striding into the courtyard. "Ah I should have known. We meet again Harry." Lockhart said throwing an arm around Harry's shoulders.

"Last time it was close to kidnapping. This time it is manhandling. Surely you don't want to lose your job for manhandling a student, now do you Professor?" Harry asked sweetly and Lockhart hastily removed his arm from Harry, he had a look of utter shock on his face that pleased Harry. "Good, you are slowly understanding. Maybe soon you will get it through that thick skull of yours that I do not like you. With all honesty, I think you are a fake. I just need the proof."

Lockhart stammered for a minute before coming to his senses. "Fake Harry? I can certainly say with all honesty that I am not a fake." Before he had finished the bell sounded that the beginning of the next class was to start in a few minuets and the students slowly dispersed.

Harry and the others slowly walked up to Lockhart's classroom, not seeing any reason to hurry, and settled themselves at the very back of the classroom. Hermione wanted to sit at the front but Harry was having none of it. Soon everyone was sitting down waiting for Lockhart to begin. Once the class was quiet, Lockhart picked up Seamus Finnegan's copy of *Travels with Trolls* and held it up to show himself on the front cover.

"Me." Lockhart began. "Gilderoy Lockhart, Order of Merlin, third class, Honorary Member of the Dark Force Defence League and five time winner of *Witch Weekly's* Most Charming Smile Award. But I don't go about talking about that, I didn't get rid of the Bandon Banshee by smiling at her!" Not one laugh was heard through out the classroom.

"I see you all bought a complete set of my collection. Well done. I thought we would start the year off with a little quiz. Nothing much, just some simple questions to see how much all of you took in." He said walking around the classroom handing out the quiz. Harry read a couple of questions; his favourite was definitely number three:

'What, in your opinion, is Gilderoy Lockhart's biggest achievement to date?'

'How about tricking the whole wizarding world into thinking you are a good wizard who did all these remarkable things, when really, you are nothing, but a fraud that is good at memory charms.' Harry thought. That would definitely be a good answer to that question. However, he was not sure how Lockhart would react to that. He might memory charm Harry and that would be risky. What if Lockhart took away an important memory from the future? No he would not let that happen. He would not let anything risk stopping him from saving Ginny and his family this time around. Because the Weasley family was his family now, and nothing, not even Voldemort was going to take that away from him.

Half an hour later, Lockhart came round and collected the papers. Sitting at his desk at the front of the classroom, he went through them making comments whilst doing it. "Tut – tut, hardly any of you knew that my favourite colour is lilac, I said so in *Year with a Yeti*. Also a few of you need to read *Weekend with a Werewolf* more carefully – I clearly state in chapter twelve that my ideal gift would be

harmony between all magic and non-magic folk. Although I would not say no to a large bottle of Ogden's old Firewhiskey." He said giving them a wink.

"But Miss. Hermione Granger knew my secret ambition was to market my own range of hair-care potions after I rid the world of evil. Actually, she is the only person in this room who knew the answers to all the questions I believe." He said checking the paper once over. "Yes in fact she got full marks. Where is Miss. Granger?" Hermione raised her hand in the air. "Yes well done Miss, take ten points for Gryffindor."

"And so onto business. Now be warned, it is my job to arm you against the foulest creatures known to wizard kind! You may find yourselves facing your worst fears in this room. Know that no harm can befall you whilst I am here. All I ask is that you remain calm." Harry rolled his eyes at the dramatic acting that Lockhart was semi-accomplishing. He really was pathetic. "I must ask you not to scream, it might provoke them!" pulling off the cover to reveal the creatures. "Yes! Freshly caught Cornish pixies!"

"Oh no I'm going to die!" Harry shouted out in a dramatic voice, causing the whole classroom to burst into uncontrollable laughter. Even Hermione, who was not seen laughing much, could be seen shaking, trying to hold it in.

"Mr. Potter, you do not seem too afraid of the pixies." Lockhart said.

"Well, there is a reason for that, I think it's because they are pixies." Harry mockingly replied.

"Don't be so sure, tricky little devilish creatures these are." Lockhart said.

"And I agree. However, it is not exactly life threatening. I do not think many of us are going to have nightmares of pixies tonight. Not exactly one of the foulest creatures known to wizard kind, now are they? And I don't think anyone's worst fear in here would be pixies!" Harry responded causing the classroom to laugh aloud again.

"Really. Okay Mr. Potter lets see what you make of these harmful creatures." Lockhart said and he opened the cage.

It was as if all hell broke loose. The first thing the pixies did was grab Seamus Finnegan by the ears and lift him up in the air, oblivious to his screams telling them to put him down. The rest went about trashing the classroom. They grabbed books and tore them apart. They grabbed inkpots and sprayed the students that had not already hid under the tables, causing the others to do the same.

"Come on round them up, they're only pixies!" Lockhart said. Rolling up his sleeves, he pulled out his wand saying. "Peskipiski pesternoumi!" It had absolutely no affect. In fact, it just seemed to attract the attention of a pixie nearby. It grabbed Lockhart's wand out of his hand and threw it through the open window. Gulping, Lockhart dived under his desk.

When the bell rang a couple of minutes later, there was a mad rush for the door. However, when Harry and the others got to the door Harry saw they were the last ones... apart from Lockhart. "You guys wouldn't mind just putting them back in their cage would you? Good on you four." Lockhart said without letting them speak. After that, he closed the door behind him, leaving the four of them in the room.

"Can you believe him!" Neville shouted out. "And he calls himself a teacher. I can not believe I ever thought that man was good at defence." He said whilst ducking a book that was aiming for his head after being thrown by a pixie.

"But he's done so many good things in those books." Hermione argued.

"Things he said he's done Hermione." Ron argued.

"Does this look like someone who's competent at defence?" Harry asked her "The man is a joke."

"Okay, I agree with you. The man is a fake." Hermione admitted.

"Finally!" Harry said. Harry spotted a pixie in the corner and went over to it trying to corner it. The others were on the other side of the room. Smiling Harry inched his way closer to the pixie. The pixie heard him, looked up at him, and began to smile. Putting up his arms in innocence Harry edged ever closer to the pixie. Smiling he said. "I've got a proposition for you..."

Half an hour later Hermione got annoyed and immobilised every pixie. After that they managed to get them all back in their cage... well all but one. When they reached the great hall, they spotted Ginny in an alcove hidden from view. She was not alone. Harry's blood boiled when he saw Malfoy standing next to her. Harry walked fast pace over to Malfoy, whipping out his wand.

"Malfoy!" he screamed causing both Ginny and Malfoy to look at him. Taking the moment of distraction Ginny reached out and managed to yank her wand out of Malfoy's hand. Spinning it around in her palm, something she had learned to do from Bill, she cursed him before he could realise it was gone. Bat bogeys flew out of his now bloody nose causing him to drop to his knees before toppling over to roll on the floor.

"Are you okay?" Harry asked Ginny as he grabbed her shoulders to look at her. A slight bit of fear could be seen in his eyes as he looked up and down her.

"Fine." She replied breathlessly.

"Don't lie Ginny." Harry said to her.

"I'm fine, really. I was just waiting for you guys to come down from Defence against the Dark Arts and Malfoy cornered me and grabbed my wand. He only had me there for like ten seconds before you guys showed up.

"So you're alright?" Ron asked concern evident in his eyes, although unlike Harry he looked calm.

"Fine, but Percy is not." Ginny said changing the subject, a gleam of anticipation shone in her eyes. "The prank has been activated. I cannot wait to see it. And Peeves' prank on Snape was a masterpiece. So glad I sat in the front row."

"Didn't he suspect you?" Harry asked her. He had let go of her shoulders and was visibly relaxing as the subject was changed to that of pranks.

"Yes, I got fifty points taken from Gryffindor for it. However, he could not prove it, so he knew he could only do that." Ginny said smiling now.

"What happened?" Ron asked.

"His robes got changed into a dress. He had lipstick and everything." Ginny said laughing causing the others to do the same. "I definitely like Peeves."

"Don't we all." Harry said and they walked into the great hall. Five minutes later Percy came into the great hall. The whole room filled with laughter. Ginny definitely did a good job. He had green hair and his prefect badge now said "Prefects stink!" Harry saw that anyone close to him had a disgusted look on their face. He only understood why when Percy came closer to them. The smell was horrible. It took the twins teasing him for Percy to work out what the problem was. Scowling, he quickly stalked out of the hall.

"How long does it last Ginny?" Harry asked her. She just shrugged.

"You don't know?" Harry asked her.

"Nope. But it should wear off by tomorrow night." Ginny replied. Looking at each other Harry, Ron, and Neville burst into laughter nearly spilling their plates.

"Don't you think that is a little cruel?" Hermione asked her.

"Not for Percy!" Ginny said. "Believe me he deserves it."

After Harry saw that the others had finished eating their tea he opened up his pocket and a head of a pixie showed out of it.

"What's that?" Ginny asked straight away.

"A freshly caught Cornish pixie." Harry replied causing Ron, Neville, and Hermione to look his way.

"Harry, please tell me you didn't." Hermione beseeched.

"I didn't." Harry joked before picking up the pixie and placing him on the table.

"Have fun little guy." Harry said to him and the pixie rushed away starting to throw food about. It was funny what one little pixie could



do. Soon the great hall was covered in food and hardly anyone knew why. It was not until the pixie reached the staff table did people see what was going on. Lockhart had gone ghostly white when the pixie stopped in front of him. The pixie quickly grabbed Lockhart's hair and pulled Lockhart's face down into the food causing a howl of laughter from the student body. Five minutes later and the hall was still in chaos. Suddenly there was a bang overhead causing everyone to stop what he or she were doing and look up at the ribbon that had appeared. Like before, it formed itself into words.

The Ghosts of the Marauders would like to say thank you to everyone for this joyful day.

We have decided to give you a little break before we pull any more pranks so the new students can get settled in here at Hogwarts. Have fun and do not worry, a prank might soon find its way to you.

Prince of Mischief.

Whilst everyone was reading what it said, Harry spotted the pixie near the door of the great hall. Looking around the pixie quietly excited the hall. The next few days would definitely be fun, Harry thought.

An: another chapter for you. And it is bigger than originally planned. And this is before Heather and Mark go through it all. But I must regret that the chapters are probably back to normal size, which is around the 4k/5k mark. Although this is around the 7k mark.

Disclaimer: I Do Not Own Harry Potter

Just before the first rays of the sun were up an over enthusiastic quidditch captain roughly shook Harry awake. It was Saturday morning technically although Harry wondered if you could really deem it morning since even the sun had not seen fit to wake yet. Harry did not know what it was with early mornings and Wood booking quidditch practice, then again he really did not care. All he wanted to do was stay in bed.

"You better have a bloody good excuse of waking me up, Wood." Harry growled out as he tried to burry his face in his pillow. "And saying quidditch practice does not count as one."

"It's part of our new training program." Wood responded, his voice sounding way too much awake for this time in the morning.

"Why do we need a new training program? Wasn't last year's good enough?" Harry moaned out.

"True, but the others will now try twice as hard to beat us. This means we need to double our efforts to make sure we are the better team." Wood explained, he was practically bouncing on the balls of his feet in excitement. "Now get up and I'll meet you in the changing rooms."

"Wait, you mean we're not even allowed breakfast first?" Harry asked incredulously while lifting his head to look at Wood.

"You'll have time for that later." Wood told him before leaving the room. Harry was glad that he did otherwise he would have probably hexed him, wand or no wand. Slowly, Harry got up and changed into his quidditch robes trying not to disturbed his room mates any more than they had been already, and headed down to the quidditch pitch.

Once he got to the pitch, he entered the changing rooms to see that everyone else was already there. "What took you so long Harry?" Wood asked him as he settled down next to Angelina.

"I would shut up while you're ahead Wood." Harry growled back. "Or has everyone forgotten that I can now do magic. You have me down here so start bloody talking. Or else I'm going back up to the castle to bed."

"Fine." Wood said before going over to the board to reveal diagram upon diagram of new moves. He even had a rehearsed speech to go with it. Board after board came and went but still Wood did not look like he was going to stop anytime soon. Finally, after three hours of continuous talking about the new tactics, Wood finished. "Is that clear to everyone? Any questions?"

"Yeah, a few. Only one that needs to be answered now though..." Harry said.

"And what may that be?" Wood asked him.

"Why couldn't you have told us this when we were awake?" Fred answered

"What he said." Harry muttered, agreeing with Fred.

"Now listen here. Just because we won the cup last year, does not mean we can slack off. We need to train harder than before to make sure we stay the best team. Do you guys want the cup to go to another house?" Wood shouted whilst glaring at them. No one spoke. "I'll take that as a no. Now let's go." He grabbed his broom and marched out of the changing rooms, the rest of the Gryffindor team reluctantly followed him.

Harry walked out onto the pitch to see Ron, Hermione and Neville sitting in the stands. Frowning he noticed that there was no Ginny.

"You nearly finished yet?" Ron shouted out with a bit of toast still in his mouth.

"Ronald manners!" Hermione scolded him causing Ron to roll his eyes.

"Haven't even started yet." Harry shouted out. "Where is Ginny?"

"She was in bed when we came down." Neville shouted back.

"She looked really tired still so I thought you wouldn't mind her sleeping in." Hermione shouted.

"Of course not." Harry replied.

"Harry, stop yapping and get up in the air!" Wood shouted to him.

"Sir, yes sir!" Harry shouted to Wood and then he mounted his broom.

"Stop with the sarcastic remarks will you!" Wood shouted at him.

Harry decided not to respond to that and kicked off from the ground. With the wind soaring around his face, he flew high up into the air. Higher and higher he went. He kept going until he was as high as the clouds and the Quidditch pitch looked like a tiny spot. He then flipped his broom over and started to descend. Picking up speed as he went, Harry dove down to the ground. The stadium was coming towards him very fast and Harry concentrated hard. He could hear screams that were no doubt coming from Hermione. Just as he was about to hit the ground he straightened out and shot along the pitch only about an inch away from the grass.

"What the hell do you think you are doing Potter!" Wood's voice carried over to him once he had slowed down. Harry looked to see everyone rushing over to him. "What kind of stunt do you think you are playing at? You could have been seriously hurt."

"Come on Wood, that was fun." Harry replied grinning ear to ear. "At least I didn't do my free fall special."

"What's your free fall special?" Hermione asked him. By the tone of her voice, you could tell that she wasn't sure that she wanted to know.

"Oh that is where I jump off the broom and hold on with it in one hand letting me just free fall down to the ground. Then I jump back on the broom just before I hit the ground. And I don't think I'll mention my other one."

"What other one?" Neville asked.

"That one's where I let go of the broom completely." Harry said shrugging.

"Are you mad?" Angelina asked.

"You want me to answer that?" Harry responded.

"You're going to get yourself killed doing that!" Katie replied in exasperation. Looking around Harry could see that all the girl's faces were white while the boys seemed to be stuck between thinking it was cool or crazy. All except the twins of course who were looking at Harry like he was a god.

"I haven't done so yet." Harry told her while shrugging.

"Ginny is going to blow her top when she learns you did this. You know that right." Ron told him.

"Well she's not going to know." Harry said while giving everyone an expectant look. "Is she?" he added nervously.

"You think I'm going to bloody well tell her." Ron said. "I saw the bat bogey hex. I do not want to end up in the hospital. She wasn't even mad when she did it to Malfoy."

"Who's Ginny?" Wood asked.

"Harry's best friend." Ron said. "She's my sister. And she has one hell of a temper."

"She's bloody scary when you get her mad." Fred said nodding along with his twin.

"Yes, and she has feelings for Harry. Therefore, when she learns Harry endangered his life, she's not going to be happy." George said.

"Come on guys, you're overacting." Harry said. "Ginny's not that bad."

"So you're going to tell her?" Fred asked looking strait at Harry with that I dare you look.

"What?" Harry said shocked. "Hell no! I'm not that dumb. She definitely has one hell of a temper, and I have a policy of trying not to get her mad. I would like to live to see adulthood." All of the Weasley boys were now giving Harry the 'I told you so' look while trying to hold in their laughter. But before any of them could say anything, they were interrupted.

"You two sound like a lovely couple." Alicia said while flashing Harry a wide smile.

"Couple!" Harry said shocked. "We're not going out. We're best friends."

"We'll whatever you two are; she's definitely not going to like this." Hermione said.

"Like what?" the voice of Ginny came to Harry's ears.

"Nothing!" Harry said quickly.

"Right, you said that a little too quickly Harry. Why are you down here and not flying?" Ginny asked coming into view.

"Ginny, ever heard of Harry's free fall special?" Neville asked while completely either ignoring or not noticing the warning look on Harry's face.

Harry winced. "You DID NOT do that did you!" Ginny said rounding on Harry.

"No I didn't." Harry said shaking his head vigorously. The twins could be heard in the background sniggering at the look of fear on Harry's face.

"Then what's the fuss." Ginny asked confused.

"I kind of did my dive instead." Harry mumbled.

"The one were you dive from over four hundred feet up in the air?" Ginny asked with raised eyebrows.

"Yup." Harry said gulping.

"Did you get hurt?" Ginny asked now narrowing her gaze on him.

"Of course not Ginny, when have you known me to get hurt by that?" Harry asked her. Anyone that had been paying attention could have picked out the nervousness in his voice.

"Good it means me hurting you now will be more rewarding for me." Ginny said sweetly.

"Can you harm him after practice?" Wood asked her. "It's just we got plays we need to do. Do not worry; your boyfriend will be back in one piece so you can break him then."

"He isn't my boyfriend." Ginny pointed out. "Which he should be glad about because if he was..."

"Point taken." Harry said quickly. "No more specials."

"Good doggy." Ginny said.

"Watch it." Harry threatened playfully which caused Ginny to smile sweetly.

"I don't believe it!" Wood interrupted them.

"Yes, Harry Potter beaten by a girl. Quite fun." Ginny said mocking Harry.

"Not that. Slytherins" Wood said and they all turned to look to see the Slytherin team marching out onto the pitch. "I booked the pitch for today! We will see about this. FLINT!" Wood bellowed out the last word. "We booked this pitch so you can clear off."

"So nice to see you too. And we're not going anywhere. We have permission to use the pitch today." Flint said getting a piece of paper out of his pocket. "I, Professor S. Snape, give the Slytherin team permission to practice today on the Quidditch pitch owing to the need to train their new seeker."

"You have a new seeker?" Wood asked. "Where?"

Draco Malfoy then moved into view, a smug smile on his face. "Malfoy." Harry said greeting him.

"Alright Potter." Malfoy said and then he looked at Ginny. "And we meet again Miss Weasley."

"Stay away from her." Harry growled out.

"And what you going to do about it Potter?" Malfoy sneered. "You're all threats and no action. You do not scare me, not any more."

"You should be." Harry said.

"It's quiet poetic isn't it. You trying to save the damsel in distress." Malfoy sneered.

"I'm not any damsel." Ginny growled out.

"And so she speaks." Malfoy said "You like being protected by your pathetic boyfriend?"

"Why does everyone think Harry's my boyfriend?" Ginny asked frustrated.

"Cause you make such a cute couple." Malfoy drawled.

"Glad you think so but I suggest you clear off now so we can practice." Harry said.

"We're not going anywhere, we have permission." Flint said.

"And we booked it." Wood countered.

"How about a race?" Harry said suddenly. "Seeker versus Seeker. First seeker to catch the snitch, their team gets to practice. How about it, Flint, Malfoy, Wood?"

"You think you can beat me when I'm on this." Draco said holding out his new Nimbus Two-Thousand and One.

"It's not about the broom, it's about the rider." Ron said.

"Yes well, you lot would think that." Malfoy said. "It's a shame the Gryffindor team can only afford Cleansweep Fives., a museum might bid for them though. You can get Cleansweep sixes then."

"At least no one had to buy their way into the team. They got in on pure talent." Hermione said.

"No one asked for your opinion you filthy little mudblood." Malfoy spat at her.



Harry, already knowing what was going to happen, had his wand tip pointing at Malfoy as soon as he finished that sentence. However, he was not expecting Ron to curse Malfoy right away. A jet of green light came from the red haired boy's wand and hit Malfoy squarely in the chest, causing him to fall over backwards.

Malfoy had a look of fury on his face and opened his mouth to retort but words did not come out. Instead, he belched and a couple of slugs came out of his mouth. The whole Gryffindor team burst out laughing.

"As your seeker is in no fit order to fly at the moment, I suggest you get your team off the pitch so we can practice." Harry said.

"You'll pay for this." Flint roared out.

"I didn't do anything." Harry said smiling, watching the Slytherin team leave the pitch. Once they left Wood called for quiet.

"We still need to do our practice." Wood announced. "Everyone up in the air."

-oOoOoOo-

It was at least three hours later when Harry walked out of the changing rooms to meet the others.

"What are we up to now?" Harry asked.

"Well there's an essay for Flitwick we need to write and I'm sure Ginny has some homework to do." Hermione started ticking her points off on her hand.

"We are not doing homework." Ron said. "It's the weekend."

"Ronald honestly, you take that attitude and you'll fail your classes." Hermione scolded him.

"It's sunny and a Saturday morning." Neville told her. "Why would we want to do homework now?"

"Plus you're wrong I don't have any to do." Ginny said grinning. "I did it all last night."

"Wish the boys followed our example." Hermione said.

"Yes because Wild-Fire here is such an honest student that never breaks the rules." Harry said smirking.

"When is your next prank?" Ron asked.

"Haven't got a clue." Harry responded.

"We should do it soon." Ginny said "I'm getting bored."

"Classes boring you already?" Harry asked. "What happened to the excited girl on the first of September who could not wait to come?"

"But they're so easy." Ginny muttered.

"Easy!" Harry said.

"Yeah." Ginny responded. "I managed to get the match into a needle in the first lesson."

"Took Harry ages to do that." Neville said. "Actually, did you manage to do that?"

"Come to think about I don't think I did." Harry said thinking. "I can do it now though, otherwise I wouldn't have passed the exam."

"This is what confuses me." Ginny said. "You could do magic, I mean you did magic in Romania when you came out to see me."

"He did?" Ron, Neville, and Hermione said together.

"I did?" Harry asked, confused.

"I was cold so you did a warming charm on my jacket." Ginny said. "Remember."

"No..." Harry lied. Truthfully he did.

"Ginny that type of spell is a fourth grade spell. Sorry to Harry, but he wouldn't have managed to do that spell." Hermione said.

"But he did. You did." Ginny said the last sentence looking at Harry.

"Err, maybe it was in a dream. You know a dream you had of Harry." Ron said quietly.

"It wasn't a dream, surely you remember Harry." Ginny said looking at him.

He hated doing this. Nevertheless, it had to be done or people would get suspicious of him and he couldn't afford that to happen. "Sorry Ginny, I don't." Harry said quietly.

"You did though, when we were looking around the dragon pens. I said I was cold so you took my jacket off and did a warming charm on it." Ginny said quickly, now confused.

"Ginny leave it. It was obviously a dream." Ron said. "Next time you will say he kissed you."

"On the cheek he did." Ginny mumbled.

"Then it was obviously a dream then." Ron said. "I mean, why would Harry kiss you?"

Ginny took a quick look at Harry and he saw that she had tears in her eyes. She turned to bolt but Harry had enough. He might have to lie about the magic but that he was not going to lie about.

"It was a quick peck on the cheek." Harry said, causing Ginny and the rest to look shocked at him. "She gave me a picture of The Burrow with the writing 'Your home away from home' on it. You, your brothers, and your parents were outside it waving. I think of you lot as my family and its nice to know that The Burrow is my home too...as well as Potter Manor. It meant so much to me. I thought about what would mean a lot to Ginny. And then I thought that a kiss would so I gave her a little peck on the cheek."

Ginny, who a couple of seconds ago looked like she was going to cry, now could be seen smiling with joy.

"You kissed my sister?" Ron asked with a small look of disgust.

"On the cheek as a Christmas present." Harry replied.

"Okay... right." Ron said. "But the spell?"

"Didn't happen." Harry said. He didn't really like the look Hermione was giving him now.

"So moving on, we are not doing homework." Neville said deciding to change the subject.

"Why don't we visit Hagrid?" Harry said shrugging. "We haven't done that in ages."

Agreeing with Harry they all walked away from the pitch and to Hagrid's hut. Just as they reached the door, it opened to reveal Professor Lockhart coming out of it. Grabbing Ginny, Harry ducked under a bush so they could not be seen.

"My, my Mr. Potter. If you wanted a little rendezvous in the bushes all you had to do was ask." Ginny whispered out.

"Shut it you." Harry whispered back.

"Ah Mr. Weasley, Mr. Longbottom, Ms Granger." Lockhart said greeting them. "You seem to be one short. Where is Mr. Potter?"

"Err... we don't know." Neville said looking around. "We really don't know."

"Well if you see him tell him I'm looking for him." With that, Lockhart disappeared up to the castle. Once it was clear, Harry and Ginny came out of the bushes.

"What were you two doing in there?" Ron asked suspiciously. He still couldn't get the thought that Harry had kissed his sister willingly, whether it was only on the cheek or not.

"Wouldn't you like to know?" Ginny said sweetly.

"WHAT! POTTER," Ron bellowed. "WERE YOU DOING WITH MY SISTER!"

"Hiding." Harry said backing away. "I swear." Ginny could not help but laugh loudly.

"Ginny?" Ron said turning to her.

"Who would have thought that Harry could kiss like that!" Ginny said before sighing.

"I swear we didn't do anything!" Harry said backing hurriedly away from Ron. He did not want to be the one belching slugs. "Ginny!" Harry cried as he tripped and fell down.

"You should have thought of this before trying to woo oh so sweet innocent me." Ginny said batting her eyelashes.

Ron stopped in his tracks, wand still pointing at Harry and turned to look at Ginny with a thoughtful look on his face. After a couple of seconds, he dropped his wand and went to help Harry up. Harry was, needless to say, very confused. So was Ginny.

"Why aren't you cursing him?" Ginny asked.

"You nearly had me Ginny." Ron said now smiling. "But you made one slip up."

"What are you talking about?" Ginny demanded.

"You called yourself innocent." Ron said. "You are a lot of things..."

"Yeah, skiving little rat bag comes to mind at the moment." Harry added in and Ginny pouted, pretending to be hurt.

"...But there is one thing you are not." Ron continued. "You are most definitely not innocent."

Ginny looked at Harry. "You do know I wasn't actually going to let him curse you right Harry? I wasn't going to let him get that far. Besides, this was payback anyhow."

"For what!" Harry demanded.

"For the train." Ginny said simply and Harry's memory flashed back to when he had lied to Hermione about the spell to stop your teeth rotting and then redirected Hermione's attention to Ginny so that Hermione bombarded her with questions.

"Damn it." Harry muttered.

"What happened on the train?" Neville asked confused.

"Never mind." Ginny said. "Harry knows and that's all that matters. You should know by now Harry that you could never get one over on me. Not without payback at least."

Harry just shrugged. "Worth a shot really, don't you think?"

"True. It meant I could do this and I can't deny that this wasn't fun." Ginny said grinning from ear to ear.

"Glad I'm the object of your enjoyment." Harry replied while rolling his eyes.

"Yes, in every possible way!" Ginny said.

"We do not need to know about your romantic dreams of Harry, Ginny. Leave that for when I'm not around at least." Ron said.

"That's not what I meant." Ginny muttered blushing slightly.

"I know." Ron said. "You think you're the only one that can get pay back."

"Ron you are so...." Ginny started. But what he was the others did not find out because at that precise moment Hagrid flung his door open.

"Well, look 'oo it is." Hagrid's voice boomed. "'Bin wonderin' when you lot would come ter see meh!"

"It hasn't been that long Hagrid." Harry said as they walked into his hut.

"Wel' yer 'ere now so no point talkin' 'bout tha'." Hagrid said and then he noticed Ginny sitting next to Harry.

"Now you mus' be the famous Ginny." Hagrid said while his beard twitched in what Harry was sure was a smile forming.

"Err famous?" Ginny asked confused.

"Well 'arry didn' talk about ye much." Hagrid said. "But when 'e did ye could tell 'e thought about ye a lot."

"Hagrid!" Harry said annoyed and Ginny blushed a little.

"Yeh well, what've ye lot been up te then? 'ow's yer classes?" Hagrid asked them.

"Good. Harry is actually doing magic now." Hermione said.

"Gee thanks Hermione." Harry said in mock indignance. "You don't have to sound too surprised about it."

"I didn't mean it like that." Hermione said huffing and folding her arms.

"What did Professor Lockhart want Hagrid?" Neville asked changing the subject.

"Tellin' me 'ow ta get kelpies out o' the well." Hagrid huffed out. "Like I don' a'ready know. I'va 'ad this job fer 50 years if you coun' the time I was apprentice to the prev'us gamekeeper."

"You think he's a git too then?" Harry asked him.

"If 'e's dun 'alf of those things 'e said in 'is books I'll eat ma kettle." Hagrid said.

"Well, glad there's someone else around here who think he's a fake." Harry said trying hard not to look at anyone in particular, especially Hermione.

"I just think you're being a little too hard on him, that's all." Hermione raised to the not so subtle jab.

"You agreed after the pixie fiasco!" Harry reminded her.

"Well it was his first day." Hermione back-pedalled uncertainly. "Maybe we could give him a chance. And Professor Dumbledore obviously believes him because he gave him the job."

"Tha' was 'cause 'e was the only man fer the job." Hagrid said with an audible scoff. "An' I mean the only one. Without 'im yer wouldn't 'ave defense against the dark art lessons."

"They're not really lessons now." Ginny muttered.

"So I see." Hagrid said nodding. "So wha' made yeh 'cide to come make a visit?"

"Other than that Ginny hadn't met you. Ron cursed Malfoy." Harry said in a manner that made it sound like it happened every day. And in Harry's mind if you counted the threat of a curse it happened every hour.

"Yeah, he was belching up slugs and everything." Ginny said gleefully with a mischievous gleam in her eye. "Ron is going to teach me it when we get back up to the castle."

"I am?" Ron asked perplexed.

"Yes. You are." Ginny said forcefully. "That curse could be useful for later on in life."

"Like when?" Ron asked.

"Like when some oh dear brothers of mine annoy me." Ginny said smiling back at her confused brother.

"Your bat bogey hex not good enough now, Gin?" Harry asked smiling.

"I like variety." Ginny simply replied, causing the others to laugh out.

"Well I'm not sur' if cursin' Malfoy was a good idea." Hagrid interrupted. "'is father migh' come up ter the school to complain. Why did yer curse 'im in the firs' place?"

"He called Hermione... a... well..." Ron began



"Mudblood." Harry finished for him.

"He didn'!" Hagrid said outraged.

"He did. And it's not the first time either." Harry told him.

"Well, well dun ter Ron." Hagrid said.

"You don't actually condone what Ron did do you Hagrid?" Hermione asked him. She seemed to be truly astonished if not a little scandalized. Ron turned to her outraged.

"You are going to tell me off for defending you!" Ron half asked angrily.

"But you could get expelled for that." Hermione said truly exasperated. She just didn't get how it was that they weren't concerned about the repercussions. "Sorry if I don't want one of my best friends to be expelled."

"I won't be expelled." Ron said but he did look a little nervous now.

"So changin' the subject...I 'ear someone 'as been given out signed photos." Hagrid said looking at Harry with one eyebrow raised.

"If that pompous idiot that calls himself a professor is still spreading that I'll..." Harry muttered angry.

"Calm down 'arry!" Hagrid said holding up his arms. "I was only jokin'. I told 'im tha' yah did no' need to give out signed photos. Yeh will always be more famous than 'im!"

"Thanks Hagrid." Harry said smiling sheepishly. "But I don't like begin famous, you know that. That's what makes Lockhart so annoying. He keeps telling me not to go bigheaded, chase after reporters, and try to get into the news so young and to stop trying to get so famous. When I want none of it what so ever."

"Jus' what I thought." Hagrid said nodding. Then he turned toward the others trying to change the subject and suggested. " 'ere, any of yeh want to see meh pumpkins?"

Hermione taking the hint immediately agreed before Ron who was looking constipated could refuse the offer. Gathering their cloaks they all went outside and into Hagrid's vegetable patch. As they rounded to the back side of the hut to see massive, boulder size pumpkins that were dotted around the garden, Hermione's eyes lit up.

"Ther'a gettin' on well aren't they." Hagrid said to them, the look on his face that of a proud parent. "Ther'a doing better then I spec'ted."

"Engorgement charm, yes?" Hermione said examining them as if they were a new and rare find to the world.

"Yes. Mum did them like this too." Ginny said agreeing, eyeing Hermione in amusement. "You have done a good job Hagrid. They look really great." In the middle of Ginny's complement Ron's stomach rumbled. "Typical brother of mine." Ginny muttered shaking her head.

"I can help it if I'm hungry!" Ron retorted.

"But you're always hungry!" Ginny snapped annoyed.

"Can we have the brother-sister argument later?" Harry asked looking between the two and hoping that he wouldn't have to break up a fight.

"We're not arguing!" They both said at the same time causing Harry, Hermione, and Neville to laugh.

With Ron and Ginny scowling at their friends who continued to laugh at the two they all said goodbye to Hagrid and headed up to the school. Just as they got into the entrance hall Snape swept down on them.

"You think that breaking the rules is fun." Snape sneered. "Well, you won't be laughing now. All of you are on the train home tonight. Expelled for sure."

"We don't have a clue what you are on about!" Harry exclaimed confused and a little annoyed.

"Mr. Malfoy is in the hospital wing belching slugs." Snape shouted.

"And I would be expelled for that because?" Harry asked. But before Snape could answer, the entrance hall doors opened and in walked Lucius Malfoy.

"Ah these are the people that cursed my son I take it." Lucius said coldly. "I should have known it was Potter and his crew. Well take a good look around...it will be the last you ever see of this place. Mark my words."

"I will not be leaving because I did not do anything." Harry replied nonchalantly.

"You count cursing my son as nothing?" Lucius demanded.

"I would if I cursed him. But I didn't." Harry said.

"That's not Mr. Malfoy's story." Snape interrupted scowling at the one he believed responsible for all the problems. "He said that he was talking to your fellow Gryffindors when all of a sudden you five cursed him. He managed to dodge a couple of curses but Mr. Potter's hit him and Ms. Weasley's hit him. The next thing he knew he was belching up slugs. What do you have to say to that Potter?"

"Well since he used the term 'mudblood' he should have expected it. However, I still stand by what I said that I did not curse him. You can check my wand if you wish." Harry said handing out his wand.

"We don't need to." Lucius said. "We have the whole Slytherin team as eyewitnesses. They back up my son's story."

"I did not curse him." Harry almost growled, he was starting to get angry now.

"LIAR!" Snape shouted.

"Severus!" Came the voice of Dumbledore from the stairs and Harry turned to see him walking toward them. "That will do. Mr. Malfoy it is good to see you. Your son has stopped belching slugs and should be out of the hospital wing within the next half an hour." Dumbledore continued.

"I take it Potter is going to be expelled." Lucius said, sneering down at the youth in question.

"I have spoken to both set of teams. According to the Gryffindor team, it was Mr. Weasley that cursed Mr. Malfoy and Mr. Potter did not do anything. According to the reports Mr Weasley acted in retaliation to your son using a term that I do not appreciate being used in my school." Dumbledore replied calmly.

"So you're letting them get away with it?" Lucius demanded.

"No I am not. Mr. Weasley broke school rules by cursing him. Therefore, I will have to give Mr. Weasley detention. And I do not like the language Mr. Malfoy used so he will too will be given detention." Dumbledore explained.

"My son did nothing wrong and don't you think him being put in the hospital wing is punishment enough?" Lucius demanded

Dumbledore looked at Harry and Harry had to agree with Malfoy senior. Even though what he did deserved a detention; coughing up slugs did seem to serve as a good enough punishment. "Agreed, Mr. Malfoy will not be receiving a detention." Dumbledore said, as if he was reading Harry's mind at the time. But Harry knew he was not because he had his Occlumency shields up. Dumbledore, it seemed, was still a mystery till this day.

"But what about Potter!" Lucius demanded.

"I did not curse him!" Harry argued. "Check my wand." Harry said holding his wand out to Dumbledore.

"That will be useless. It only shows the last five spells you've done. You could have easily cast five spells to clear it off." Lucius said glaring down at his son's rival.

"Then it is innocent until proven guilty." Dumbledore said looking into Mr. Malfoy's eye's.

"Does not the Slytherin team's word count for anything?" Snape demanded.

"There is lack of sufficient evidence." Dumbledore said holding his hand out in a helpless manner.

"Therefore there is a lack of evidence that my son called this girl by that name!" Lucius stated.

"But your son is not getting punished Mr. Malfoy." Dumbledore reminded him, the usual twinkle in his eyes shining brightly.

"You said him being in the hospital wing was punishment." Lucius said.

"What would you have me do Mr. Malfoy? Grab a time turner and go back to when he was cursed and stop it. I can not change the past." Dumbledore said calmly.

"But you can punish the people responsible for my son being in the hospital wing!" Lucius demanded.

"And Mr. Weasley is getting detention." Dumbledore said now getting angry.

"But what about Potter!" Lucius demanded.

"I did not curse him!" Harry yelled, now enraged.

"Ah but did you threaten him." Snape asked. "Because Malfoy said you had your wand pointing at him, threatening him before all five of you cursed him."

Harry opened his mouth to respond but suddenly closed it. 'Damn it' he thought. Snape smirked.

"It seems that Mr. Potter also broke school rules by threatening Mr. Malfoy." Snape said. "He should also be given detention, at the very least."

Dumbledore eyed Harry before sighing. "Mr. Potter will be given detention along with Mr. Weasley. Now Mr. Malfoy, I am sure you wish to see your son."

Lucius Malfoy eyed Harry angrily before storming up the stairs. Snape on the other hand sneered at Harry before following Lucius.

"Professor McGonagall will tell you of your detentions later this evening." Dumbledore said. Harry just nodded then the five of them headed towards Gryffindor tower.

"That's just stupid." Ginny said once they were out of earshot.

"Well they..." Hermione said.

"We what? We deserve it?" Ron shouted. "We defend you and you jump on our backs for it."

"No, Ronald, if you would let me finish. They did not have any choice. You broke school rules. I do not say you deserve it but Professor Dumbledore did not have a choice. You could tell he did not want to give you and Harry detention, but he had to." Hermione told them.

"Oh." Was all Ron had to say to that.

-oOoOoOo-

When they went down to tea that evening McGonagall was waiting for them at their table. "I'm here to inform you that your detentions will take place tonight." She said. "You Mr. Weasley will be polishing silver in the trophy room with Mr. Filch. No magic." Ron gulped at those words. "You Mr. Potter will be helping Professor Lockhart answer his fan mail."

"I didn't know they still used torture for punishments here." Harry muttered. McGonagall raised her eyebrow at the statement.

"If you would like to know Professor Lockhart requested you personally." McGonagall said.

"Sorry Professor, but I didn't want to know that." Harry groaned out.

"Five points deducted for your cheek Potter. Both of you will arrive sharply at eight o'clock tonight." With that, she left the Gryffindor table and went up to the staff table.

"Polishing the trophy room." Ron moaned. "Filch will have me there all night."

"At least you don't have to put up with Lockhart." Harry said in disgust. "Answering fan mail. Why does god hate me?"

-oOoOoOo-

At eight o'clock Harry found himself outside Lockhart's office. The door swung open after Harry knocked to reveal Lockhart smiling down at him. "Harry my boy, come in, come in." He said leading Harry into his office. "You will be writing the address on the envelopes so you can just take a seat right here next to me." As Lockhart sat behind his desk Harry could see that there was an extra chair sitting right next to the one already occupied. As he rounded the desk, Harry pulled out the chair and moved it to the end of the desk, trying to get as far away from the fraud as possible. "Come, come now Harry I don't bite." Lockhart said in response to Harry's actions. Chuckling slightly when Harry glared at the professor he continued. "Well never mind, best get started, first one is to Gladys Gudgeon. Huge fan bless her."

Slowly minute by minute the time went by. After what seemed like ages Harry looked up at the clock to see that only forty minutes had passed. 'Why does that always happen?' Harry thought. 'When you're doing something you hate time always goes by slowly.'

As the candles burned lower and lower Harry got more tired. Until he heard the voice that he had been dreading all year. The voice that Harry wished he could not hear. The voice that made him realize exactly what he was doing.

"come...come to me...let me rip you...let me tear you...let me kill you..."

Harry's blood ran cold. At this precise moment, Voldemort was possessing Ginny, his Ginny. He did not know what to do or think. He felt like he was being ripped in half. On one hand the part of him that was a overprotective husband wanted to end this right now and not let her suffer. On the other hand the part of him that was still very much a teenage boy was insecure about whether she would ever love him if he didn't let her do this. And Merlin did he want, need, her to love him. Was this really the best thing to do? Was he making a big mistake? Harry did not say anything. He did not really want to think about what was happening right at this moment to

Ginny. He just wanted out of this detention. He just wanted everything to be over. It was another forty minutes before Lockhart noticed the time and dismissed Harry.

Harry walked slowly back to the common room. He was going to check on Ginny in the morning. He prayed that she was okay. He did not know what to do now. It was one thing to say he was going to let her go through this, but now that it was happening, Harry was defiantly having second thoughts.

C-A:N: Sorry it has taken so long to get this out but sometimes life happens, ya know. Well I'm back and the chapters should be coming regularly again. So hope you like it.

A:N: if people didn't know C-A:N means co authors notice, which is heather. Like she said were back and the chapters should be coming regally now. I think I'm like four chapters ahead of you so its just you need to wait for the chapters to go through the beta stages. And with heather back now that shouldn't take too long. Hope you enjoyed and once again were sorry for the wait.



Disclaimer: I do not own Harry Potter.

The next morning Harry was awake quite early. He just couldn't sleep any longer, all he seemed able to do was toss and turn thinking about what he should do. Admitting defeat, and realising that the other boys wouldn't be awake for a while, he decided he could do just as much thinking in front of the fire. With a heavy sigh Harry got up and ready for the day. When Harry came down to the common room, he noticed Ginny sitting at a table by the fire. Ginny had heard someone coming down the stairs so she turned to look at who it was, recognizing that it was Harry she smiled at him.

"Morning Harry." She said while turning back to her homework, which she had out in front of her.

"You alright?" Harry asked her, concerned by the fact that less than seven hours ago she was being possessed.

"It's early in the morning but apart from that fine." Ginny said shrugging. "Why'd you ask?"

"No reason." Harry said quickly. "I thought you told Hermione yesterday that you'd done that." Harry said nodding over towards the homework she was doing.

"Did you really want to do homework on a Saturday?" she asked quirked an eyebrow at him.

Harry chuckled. "No, Not really."

"Then your point is?" Ginny asked going back to her homework.

"That Hermione will go ballistic when she finds out you really didn't do your homework before yesterday." Harry said walking over to the table Ginny was working on and sitting down in the seat opposite.

"And there you have the answer to your next question." Ginny said, scribbling some lines down on her parchment.

"My next question?" Harry asked confused. Ginny just looked straight at Harry, smirking, waiting for Harry to figure it out. "Oh...Why you're doing it now. Got yah." Ginny went back to her homework and Harry just sat and watched her.

She acted normal, she seemed normal. Heck, she was normal. Maybe this was not going to be so bad after all. Maybe he really did make the right decision. For the next hour, Harry just sat and watched Ginny, occasionally talking to her and helping her with her homework where she needed it. She was normal. If Harry did not know any better, he would say that there was no way she was getting possessed. Maybe something was finally working out for him.

-oOoOoOo-

As September merged into October, Harry found himself walking along the corridor, his Quidditch robes splattered with mud. He was on his way to the Gryffindor common room after a horrible training session. Harry did not even see the point of the practice. He knew that the Quidditch competition was going to be cancelled due to the Chamber of Secrets being opened. At the precise moment, he was just wasting time.

Coming around the corner, he noticed nearly headless Nick floating by the window, a letter in his hand. Harry's mind remembered what it was about. Moreover, the resulting promise of which Harry made last time to go to his Death Day party. Harry really did not want to go, but he did want to help. Thinking this, he made his way over to Nick.

"Hello Nick." Harry said, greeting the ghost.

"Hello, Hello." Nick said startled and looking around. Finally, he noticed Harry. "You look troubled."

"Nothing that I can do anything about right now." Harry said. "What is up with you?"

"Oh nothing, nothing." Nick said. "A matter of no importance. It is not as if I really wanted to join. Just thought I would apply. See what happens. However, apparently I don't fulfil the requirements." Nick said sighing. He shook his transparent head and Harry waited for the outburst that was to come. "But you would think, wouldn't you." Nick erupted. "That getting hit forty-five times in the neck with a blunt axe would qualify you to join the Headless Hunt?"

"Totally." Harry said nodding, planning what needed to be done. It should work.

"I mean, no one wishes for it to have been over quickly more than me. It would have saved a lot of pain and ridicule. However..." Nick started and then got his letter out of his pocket and began to read.

"We can only accept huntsmen whose heads have parted company with their bodies. You will appreciate that it would be impossible otherwise for members to participate in hunt activities such as horseback head juggling and head polo. It is with the greatest regret, therefore, that I must inform you that you do not fulfil our requirements. With very best wishes, Sir Patrick Delaney-Podmore." (Page 95 Chamber of Secrets by J. K. Rowling.)

"Half an inch of skin holding my head on Harry! Most people would think that is proper and beheaded. But not for Sir Properly Decapitated-Podmore." Nick ranted. "But don't bother yourself with my problems. You know the saying, a problem shared is a problem halved. Spill.

"It's private Nick." Harry said. "I'd rather not. However, I might be able to help you with that." Harry said indicating the letter Nick had in his hand.

How, however, Harry did not manage to say, because suddenly Mrs. Norris came around the corner and spotted Harry and the mud he was dripping onto the floor.

"Go quickly; Filch is in a bad mood." Nick said and Harry turned to hurry off. However, the cosmos once again decided Harry should suffer for when Harry reached the end of the hallway he came face to face with Filch.

"FILTH!" he shouted right in Harry's face. "Mess and muck everywhere. This is the last straw! Follow me Potter." Harry heaving an annoyed sigh had no choice but to follow the bitter old caretaker along the corridor and down the stairs, which Filch had come up from. Entering Filch's office he realized that it was just as he remembered it. 'Some things never change no matter what changes around them' Harry thought.

Sitting down in the chair closest to the door Filch sat down opposite him behind his desk and opened up his drawer. "Dungbombs, dragon bogies, and frog brains. I have had enough. Time to make

an example." He muttered to himself as he got out some parchment and a quill. "Name... Harry Potter, Crime..."

"Walking back to the common room?" Harry sarcastically asked. Really he wasn't in the mood to deal with this bitter old squib.

Filch glared at him. "Crime... Befouling the castle and back chatting. Suggested Sentence..." Just then however, as Filch's quill was hovering above the parchment, Harry heard a loud crash above them.

"PEEVES!" Filch roared out like a dragon and jumped up from his seat and ran out of the room with Mrs. Norris following him.

Harry smiled as he was left alone, trust Peeves to be up to his old tricks. Good old Peeves. In addition, Harry did not recall that Nick had to persuade Peeves much this time to cause the distraction. It was five minutes later when Filch and Mrs. Norris came back into the room.

"That vanishing cabinet was extremely valuable!" Filch told Mrs. Norris as they entered the room. "We will have Peeves out for sure this time." Filch walked behind his desk and only then did he notice the Kwikspell letter which he left out on his desk. Harry had not touched it this time so it was in the exactly same position as when Filch left. However, Filch was still mad.

"Did you read this?" Filch hissed out.

"No!" Harry said instantly.

"If I find out you're lying and you've been through my personal stuff...!" Filch warned.

"I didn't read it!" Harry said forcibly, getting angry at being accused wrongly.

"Go. I got stuff to do, need to write up this report for Dumbledore." Filch said and Harry did not need telling twice. He rushed out of the room and up the nearest staircase before slowing down to a brisk walk.

"Harry, did it work?" Nick said rushing out of the nearest classroom.

"Of course it worked." Peeves said floating next to Nick. "Ickle Harry wouldn't be here if it didn't. Probably would be hanging from his toes right now if it weren't for me."

"Don't you think that is taking it a little too far?" Harry asked quiet amused.

"Perhaps, but this is Peeves Harry." Nick said. "He takes everything too far. He only needed to cause a distraction. And low and behold he drops a whole cabinet above Filch's office."

Harry looked in the classroom to see a black and gold cabinet broken in the classroom. His breath caught when he recognized it as one of the two vanishing cabinets. He did not realize this was how it broke in the first place.

"Peeves. Make sure that this cabinet stays broken all the time, no matter what." Harry said, coldness etched into his voice.

"Okely dokely Harry." Peeves crackled.

"What's the matter?" Nick asked Harry, looking at him with concern. Harry drew his view away from the cabinet and looked at Nick's face, concern showing.

"No matter Nick. Anyway before we were rudely interrupted by Filch we were talking about the Headless Hunt were we not?" Harry asked successfully changing the subject.

"Indeed." Nick said. "But I'm not sure why you want to continue talking about that, there's nothing that can be done."

"You sure?" Harry said smiling. "Peeves, is this Sir Delaney-Podmore or whatever his name is a Hogwarts ghost?"

Peeves smiled when he realized where Harry was going with this. "He haunts one of the west towers Harry. Do you wish to speak with him?"

"Indeed I do." Harry said nodding with a smug smile plastered on his face.

"I will be right back with him." Peeves crackled and flew through the left wall.

"Harry, what are you planning?" Nick asked him.

"You'll find that out soon enough." Harry replied. Ten minutes latter Peeves flew back through the wall followed by a headless ghost. The head was currently being held underneath his left arm.

"Peeves here told me that you wish to speak to me sir." Patrick Delany-Podmore said bowing.

"Hello Pat, you don't mind if I call you Pat do you?" Harry said and then continued, not bothering to wait for an answer. "You are in charge of the recruitment into the Headless Hunt are you not?"

Pat looked at Nearly Headless Nick before turning back to Harry. "Indeed I am sir. What is it you wish?"

"I want you to invite Nick into the headless hunt." Harry said, deciding to get straight to the point.

"We have already denied him entrance..." Pat began.

"Then un-decide that and take him in." Harry said interrupting him.

Pat looked at Harry. "You misunderstand sir. I cannot...." He began again.

"Are you not a Hogwarts ghost?" Harry asked.

"Indeed I am sir but..." Pat said and once again, Harry interrupted him.

"And are you not in charge of who is recruited into the Headless Hunt." Harry said once again interrupting Pat.

"Yes sir, but..." Pat said and like last time Harry cut him off.

"So you are to obey my command and let Nick into the Headless Hunt." Harry said, getting slightly annoyed that Pat was talking back to him.

"Sir, with all due respect, what is the point? He will not be able to play head polo, head juggling, or any other games we play. He won't be able to compete." Pat said.

"It is not the games, which Nick wishes to join for. It is the company and the feeling that he belongs somewhere. Not the games." Harry said to him.

"Oh. Now I understand. But still, what am I to do?" Pat said. "We have strict guidelines; I'm not sure what the other people will say."

"Send them to me if they question your judgment of Nick joining." Harry said shrugging like he really didn't see the problem here.

"Sir this group is not a Hogwarts group. You may have authority over Hogwarts ghosts, me included, but not all the people in the Headless Hunt are. If I am to invite Nick into the group, they might not like that. It would put my position at risk."

"You would not risk that for one of your own?" Harry asked incredulously. "Are you that selfish?" Pat looked down to the floor. "This could be an excellent Death Day present. Wouldn't you agree?"

"I would." Pat agreed.

"So will you admit Nick into the Headless Hunt?" Harry asked him.

Pat sighed and then shook his head, smiling. "Of course he is welcome to join us if he still wishes."

"Excellent." Harry said. "But I'll leave you ghosts alone to sort out the details. I want to get out of this Quidditch gear."

-oOoOoOo-

Halloween approached and Harry waited on tenterhooks for the first attack to happen. Today was Friday the thirtieth, the day before Halloween. He was currently walking towards Dumbledore's office to tell him about the attack, he thought that Dumbledore should at least know when the attacks would happen. Standing on the stairs whilst they raised him up to the door of Dumbledore's office, Harry readied himself for the conversation that would follow.

Knocking on the door Harry heard Dumbledore inviting him in. "Once again Harry you manage to come to my office without being giving the password. I am very intrigued by this."

"Is your password sherbet lemon at the moment?" Harry asked sitting down.

"No Harry." Dumbledore said smiling at him. "That would be December's password."

"Ah, so the password changes every month." Harry said understanding. "Interesting. How do you figure out different passwords for all that time? Because it is always some form of sweet."

"You have your secrets, I have mine." Dumbledore said. "Unless of course you wish to tell me how you manage to come to my office without the password. I was thinking along the lines that you just remembered from last time around."

"Could be, but then it probably meant that I came to your office at least once a month and of course I wouldn't remember all those passwords. Six years and how many months are we here in school. Ten? That would be sixty passwords to remember. In order, I might add. I do have a very good memory but I don't think that is the way." Harry said. "Nor was I in trouble so often. Now if I were one of the twins you might have a solid base for your theory. However, sadly that is not how I do it but you may continue guessing if you wish."

"Only six years?" Dumbledore asked gently. "Why did you not come here for the seventh year?"

"The war." Harry answered.

"Surely I would have wanted you to come for all seven years?" Dumbledore said.

"Maybe." Harry said shrugging, not wanting to get into this now. Dumbledore, sensing what Harry was feeling changed the subject.

"So what brings you here today?" Dumbledore said smiling.



"The first attack happens tomorrow." Harry said bluntly. Dumbledore's demeanour suddenly changed.

"May I ask which student is attacked?" Dumbledore asked.

"No student. This I actually believe is a test run which unfortunately, or fortunately for us, depending which way you look at it. Mrs. Norris gets petrified." Harry said smiling.

"Yes I would assume that some students would think that Mrs. Norris' fate would be a fortunate event. However, Mr. Filch might disagree." Dumbledore said remaining calm. "So what happens?"

"I'm not sure how, but I found Mrs. Norris strung up by the tail under a torch bracket near Moaning Myrtle's bathroom. The floor was flooded and Mrs. Norris saw the basilisk's eyes in that." Harry explained.

"You found her last time?" Dumbledore asked him sounding quite intrigued.

"Yes, after that people thought that I was the heir of Slytherin and it didn't help that I spoke Parseltongue in front of the whole school at one time this year." Harry explained.

"You are a Parseltongue...interesting." Dumbledore said thoughtfully.

"You didn't know?" Harry asked. "I thought you knew? Sirius didn't tell you?"

"No he failed to mention it."

"It doesn't really matter, a person's choices make them what they are, not his powers." Harry said. "You told me that once."

Dumbledore smiled at those words. "Yes I was just about to say that myself. How is Ginny doing at the moment? She obviously hasn't been possessed yet but Tom must be breaking her down in order to be able to possess her tomorrow."

"She has been possessed before." Harry said causing Dumbledore to look surprised. "The night I had detention with Professor Lockhart was the first time Tom made her open the Chamber of Secrets and

see if he could control the basilisk through her. Before that she has been possessed to attack Hagrid's roosters." Harry explained. "She's been fine after those, I checked to make sure."

"You're positive?" Dumbledore asked him concern evident in his features.

"Completely." Harry answered nodding his head.

"Very well, Thank you for forewarning me of the attack." Dumbledore said in a voice that Harry took to mean that the discussion was finished.

"Not at all professor." Harry replied. The tone Dumbledore used made Harry think it was not all right at the moment to call him Albus.

-oOoOoOo-

That evening Harry stayed up stairs in his room. He did not want to go to the feast, he wanted to stay in the common room to check on Ginny when she got back. Once Harry thought that everyone would have gone down to the feast, Harry went out of his dormitory and headed downstairs to the common room. There he sat for what seemed like hours, waiting for Ginny.

After a couple of hours he heard the portrait opening, Harry looked up, expecting to see Ginny come through the portrait hole but instead he saw other Gryffindors coming through whispering in hush voices. As they came through, they glanced at Harry before turning back to each other and whispering more. Soon Hermione, Ron, and Neville came through and headed straight towards Harry.

"Where were you?" Hermione said as soon as she sat down next to Harry.

"I told you I wasn't feeling very well." Harry said. "Why? What's up, why is everyone whispering?"

"There was an attack. On Mrs. Norris. We first thought she was dead. Until that is, Dumbledore explained that she was just petrified." Hermione said. "But everyone knows that you weren't at dinner. People are going to suspect you."

"I'm sure there were other people that weren't at dinner." Harry said raising an eyebrow. He couldn't believe how no matter how many people it could have been he was always the first suspect.

"Well Ginny wasn't but she was asleep in her room when I went to see her." Hermione said. "But I didn't notice anyone else missing. In addition, neither did anyone else. There going to think..."

"Do you think it's me?" Harry asked her getting angry. How could she think that? Sure the rest of the school were idiots and didn't know him but how could she believe that he would do that. She was suppose to know him for Merlin sake.

"Well you got to admit it's kind of suspicious isn't it?" Hermione admitted. "You go missing and then Filch's cat gets petrified. We know that you had a run in with Filch last week."

"I can't believe you think it's me." Harry said shouting causing some people to look their way.

"Calm down mate." Ron said. "Of course we don't think it's you." He finished, throwing a horrid glance at Hermione.

"But some people are just going to think that since you weren't at dinner." Neville added hoping to save Hermione.

"I wish I didn't leave my copy of 'Hogwarts a History' at home. I didn't have room to pack it with all the Lockhart books." Hermione said.

"Why?" Harry asked although he knew the answer.

"Oh right. You wouldn't know." Ron said. "Above Mrs. Norris, written on the wall was a message. Written in blood Harry. It said 'The Chamber of Secrets has been opened. Enemies of the Heir beware.'"

"Malfoy didn't help by shouting out that Muggleborns would be next to be attacked." Neville said.

"Hey guys." came Ginny's voice from the stairwell "What's up?"

"You feeling better?" Hermione asked.

"Much, why what's wrong?" Ginny said sitting herself down next to Harry.

"There was an attack Ginny." Ron explained. "On Mrs. Norris."

"Oh well." Ginny said leaning back against the settee.

"Oh well? Ginny the cat was petrified. Dumbledore could not revive her. And above was a message saying that the Chamber of Secrets had been opened. And everyone the heir of Slytherin hated would be attacked." Ron explained.

"Oh." Ginny said quietly. "You didn't explain that part." Harry looked at Ginny closely and once again, Harry could not spot anything wrong with her. Nothing out of the ordinary. She seemed normal liked last time. Relaxing a bit, he listened to what the others were saying.

"I think its Malfoy." Ron said.

"Malfoy?" Hermione said. "Unlikely."

"Come on Hermione, you heard what he said. 'You'll be next Mudbloods'." Neville said.

"And who else do we know that hates Mudbloods as much as Malfoy." Ron said. "Plus his whole family has been in Slytherin. It wouldn't be so hard for Malfoy senior to tell little Draco how to open it."

"Maybe. However, proving it will be very difficult. We don't even know what the chamber is." Hermione said.

"Then we find out." Neville answered like that was that.

-oOoOoOo-

The next day in History of Magic, Professor Binns was talking about the Warlock convention of 1289 when Hermione put her hand up. Binns stopped suddenly shocked that such a thing had happened. "Err... yes Miss...?" he asked.

"Granger." Hermione finished for him. "I was wondering what you could tell us about the Chamber of Secrets?"

The effect in the room was instant. Dean Thomas who was leaning his head on the desk, his chin lying on the palm of his hand whilst his elbow was supporting it, slipped and he banged his chin on the desk. Lavender, who looked like she was asleep with her head in her arms, looked up at Professor Binns.

"My profession is the History of magic. I deal with facts Miss Granger." He said. "Not myths and legends." He turned back to his notes; however before he could continue speaking Hermione spoke again.

"But sir, don't all legends have a basis in fact?"

"Well I suppose one could argue that." Professor Binns said. "However the tale that you speak of is such a sensational and ludicrous tale that there is no point in telling you it. Now please if that is all..."

"The Chamber of Secrets was built by Salazar Slytherin was it not?" Harry asked.

Binns looked shocked at Harry. "Yes, that is how the legend goes. But we are not speaking of this."

"But why would Slytherin build a chamber to harm students when he helped build the castle in the first place." Harry asked interrupting again.

"There is no solid fact that the chamber was ever built Mr. Potter." Binns said, eyeing the class who were now listening to his every word. Shocked at this he thought for a moment before sighing. "Ah very well, the Chamber of Secrets it is then. It is known by all, that Hogwarts was built by the four greatest witches and wizards of the time. Godric Gryffindor, Helga Hufflepuff, Rowena Ravenclaw, and Salazar Slytherin. They built this castle away from prying muggles so they could teach students magic in secret as at that time witches and wizards suffered much prosecution."

"For a few years, the founders worked peacefully together, seeking out youngsters who showed signs of magic and bringing them here

to be educated. But then arguments and disagreements sprang up between the four teachers. A rift began to grow between Slytherin and the others. He wanted to be more selective of who was admitted to Hogwarts. He believed that only magical people from magical families should be taught. He did not trust the kids with muggle parentage. Soon an argument broke out between Gryffindor and Slytherin and Slytherin left the school shortly after."

"History tells us these things as fact. However, it was rumoured that before Slytherin left he had built a hidden chamber somewhere in Hogwarts that the other founders knew nothing about. It goes that Slytherin then sealed the chamber so that only his true heir would be able to open it up and unleash the horrors within on all those who, in Salazar Slytherin's eyes, were unworthy to be taught here at Hogwarts. This to you and me means Muggleborns."

"Sir, what do you mean by the horrors within?" Hermione asked.

"It was believed that Slytherin put some sort of monster in the chamber which only his heir would have been able to control." Binns said. "However this is complete nonsense as the thing doesn't exist. It is a myth. Now can we please get back to the lesson. There is no chamber and no monster."

"But sir." Seamus said from the front row. "If the chamber can only be opened by Slytherin's true heir, then no one would be able to find it would they?"

"Nonsense Finnigan." Binns said. "If a long succession of Hogwarts headmasters and headmistresses couldn't find the chamber...."

"But you would probably have to use some sort of dark magic to open it up so Dumbledore couldn't..." Parvati said.

"Just because a wizard doesn't use the dark arts doesn't mean he can't, like I said if the likes of Dumbledore can't find..." Binns cut across her.

"But maybe you've got to be related to Slytherin." Dean Thomas said. "So Dumbledore couldn't."

"That's enough!" Binns said. "It is a myth, a legend. There is not one ounce of solid proof that it exists. I already regret telling you such a

foolish story. We will return if you please, to solid, believable, verifiable fact!"

-oOoOoOo-

Later that night Hermione had just finished telling Ginny what they found out in History of Magic.

"If it is a myth... how come Mrs. Norris got attacked? I mean surely Dumbledore would have managed to cure her if a student did it. Right?" Ginny told them.

"Yes." Hermione said. "I agree. This makes me think that whatever attacked Mrs. Norris was not human. You know what Binns said...the monster within. But who could it be controlling it? Who would want all the squibs and Muggleborns out of Hogwarts?"

"Let's see, who do we know that hates Muggleborns with a burning passion?" Ron said mockingly.

"If you're saying it's Malfoy..." Hermione said.

"It fits doesn't it?" Neville said. "Plus you heard him. You will be next Mudbloods."

"Malfoy the heir of Slytherin?" Hermione speculated. "Name someone who is actually bright enough to do it then maybe."

"You don't need to be bright." Ron said. "He just needs to be told how to do it by his father. He didn't have to work anything else out, just follow the instructions. They could have had the key for centuries, handing it down from father to son."

"That's possible I suppose." Hermione said.

"Proving that will be hard." Ginny said. "It's not like he's just going to tell us when we ask him."

"No, but he's probably gloating inside the Slytherin common room right now." Ron said. "If we could get one of the Slytherins to talk."

"What, do on one of their own, heck you know Slytherins won't do that." Harry said rolling his eyes.

"There might be a way..." Hermione said looking thoughtful and nervous at the same time. "It will be very dangerous and not to mention breaking about fifty school rules."

"And how the hell are we meant to do that?" Neville asked.

"What we need to do is get into the Slytherin common room." Hermione answered.

"And how are we meant to do that?" Ginny asked raising an eyebrow.

"Polyjuice potion." Hermione answered.

"What's that?" Ron, Neville and Ginny said together.

"It's a potion of course." Harry cracked jokingly.

"Oh ha, ha, Harry." Ginny said. "If you're so clever you tell us what it does."

"It allows you to take the form of a different person." Harry said smiling at Ginny who seemed to be put out that Harry actually knew.

"Exactly, we could change into five Slytherins. No one would know it was us. Malfoy would tell us anything we want. Heck I doubt we would have to ask him if Ron's right and he is boasting about it in the common room." Hermione explained.

"What if we stay stuck looking like Slytherins?" Ron asked nervously. "This sounds a bit dodgy to me."

"It wears off after a while but getting a hold of it will be the problem. Snape said it was in the book 'Moste Potente Potions' and it's bound to be in the restricted section. You need a signed signature from a teacher to get a book out from there." Hermione lamented.

"Hard to see why we would want the book unless we were planning on making and trying one of the potions." Ron agreed.

"I think..." started Hermione. "If we made it sound as though we were just interested in the theory, we might stand a chance..."



"Oh come off it." Ron cut into her musings. "No teacher is going to fall for that. They'd have to be really thick..."

Harry looked at Ginny then smiled at her. She frowned in confusion.

"Lockhart then?" Harry said casually.

Ginny now understanding, smiled back. "Yes. I think Lockhart would be very helpful in this..."

A:N: Heres a rather canny chapter but its still got little new bits in it here and there. It's the next chapter that I can't wait to write. Well next two actually. And there gonner be roughly small so you should have them with you soon. C ya.

Disclaimer: I Do Not Own Harry Potter

Harry sat, waiting at the back of the defence classroom for the bell to ring. Luck was on his side when not two seconds after that thought, the bell rung signalling the end of class.

"Homework: compose a poem about my defeat of the Wagga Wagga Werewolf! Signed copies of 'Magical Me' to the author of the best one," Lockhart shouted as the class cleared out of the room.

Waiting for everyone to go Hermione, Ron, Neville and Harry then made their way towards Lockhart.

"Umm...Professor Lockhart," Hermione started nervously, "I wanted to get this book out of the library. Just for background reading, you see. However, the thing is that it is in the restricted section of the library. This means I need a signed signature from a teacher to get it. I'm sure it will help me better understand what you say in 'Gadding with Ghouls' about slow acting venoms..."

"Ah yes, 'Gadding with Ghouls'!" Lockhart said cheerfully. "Probably one of my most favourite books. Did you enjoy it?"

"Oh yes," Hermione said. "So clever how you trapped the last one with a tea strainer." Harry gave her a weird look at that comment. She did not notice.

"Well I don't suppose it would hurt giving the best student of the year a little extra help," Lockhart said pulling out an enormous peacock quill. "Yes beautiful isn't it? I normally save it for book signings," Lockhart said, misreading Ron's features of disgust as he wrote his signature on the piece of paper.

"So tomorrow's the first match of the Quidditch season I believe, isn't it?" Lockhart said to Harry whilst he was handing the piece of paper back to Hermione.

"Yes it is and I've got practice in a second so I've got to go," Harry said and then strode out of the door leaving Lockhart behind. A minute later Ron, Neville and Hermione came out and they started to head towards the library.

"That was rather rude Harry," Hermione scolded.

"Who cares, it's Lockhart," Ron said shrugging.

"Yeah," Neville agreed. "The important thing is that we've got the signature."

"He didn't even look at the book we wanted," Ron said. "I guess he really is a brainless git."

"He is not a brainless git!" Hermione retorted, getting angry and ready for a fight.

"Will you two shut up!" Harry said, getting annoyed. The two of them fell silent.

"Ah, quiet," Neville said. "Here, I bet another 10 galleons that they start arguing in the next two minutes."

"Another?" Ron asked, causing Hermione to shake her head.

"Yeah, I already lost ten galleons to him earlier in the week," Harry said shrugging.

"You're betting on us?" Hermione said outraged.

"It's an easy way to make some quick cash," Neville said. "We can guarantee that you two will start fighting. It's just the matter of when."

As they reached the library, they saw Ginny waiting outside the door. "Did you get it?" she asked, as they got close enough to her. Hermione showed her the note. "I guess he really is a brainless git then isn't he?" Ginny said. Hermione turned to look at her angrily whilst Ron just laughed. Ginny was confused by the look Hermione gave her. "What did I say?" she asked Harry and Neville, but they were too busy laughing to answer her.

They went into the library and went over to the vulture-faced Madam Pince. Hermione showed her the note, but did not let it go. "I was wondering if I could keep it?" she asked. Harry shook his head in disbelief at Hermione whilst Ron snatched the note out of her hand and handed it to the librarian.

After a vigorous test, Madam Pince seemed to decide that the note was genuine and went to get the book. After she handed the book to Hermione, Harry and the others quickly left the library and went straight to Moaning Myrtle's bathroom.

"Please tell me why we are here. It's a girl's bathroom," Ron said looking around disgusted.

"But it is the safest place to keep the potion," Hermione said, carefully opening up the book. "Here it is. The Polyjuice potion."

"Oh my," Hermione said as she read the instruction on how to make it. "This is one difficult potion. Lacewing flies, leeches, fluxweed and knotgrass. They're easy; they're in the student store cupboard so we can help ourselves. However, it is these ingredients here, which are going to be difficult. Powdered horn of a bicorn. Where are we going to get that? Shredded skin of boomslang. That will be tricky too. In addition, of course, something of who ever we are changing into..."

"Excuse me!" Ron said. "I am not drinking anything with Crabbe's toenails in it."

"...But we don't have to worry about that because we add that right at the last minute," Hermione continued as if she had not heard Ron.

"I'm not sure about this," Neville said. "I mean all that stuff we are going to have to steal."

"Fine," Hermione said snapping the book closed. "If you lot don't want to do this that's fine by me. I will just take the book back now. However, I think something attacking Muggleborn students is far worse then brewing this potion."

"How long will it take to make?" Ginny asked.

"About a month," Hermione answered, rescanning the book. "If everything goes to plan and we can get the ingredients soon...about a month."

"A month!" Ron said. "Malfoy could have attacked half the Muggleborns in the school by then." Ron looked at Hermione and saw the look she had on her face. "But it's the best plan we've got at the moment so I say full speed ahead," he hastily added.

However as they were leaving Ron turned to Harry and said, "It will be a hell of a lot easier if you could knock him off his broom tomorrow."

-oOoOoOo-

Harry sat in the Gryffindor changing rooms, wearing his scarlet robes and waiting for Wood to start the pep talk. Harry was thinking of the game ahead. Last time there was the rogue bludger. Would Dobby make it go after Harry again? He hoped not. He wanted to win this game as much as possible. With everything that was going on again he knew that he could not predict Quidditch games. They were completely different to last time around. And that's what scared him. What if the bludger really hurt him? Harry was shaken from his thoughts by the sound of Wood's voice starting the pre-match talk.

"The Slytherins have better brooms than us," Wood started. "That we cannot deny. However, we have better people on our brooms. And we're going to make them rue the day they let that filthy bit of slime Malfoy buy his way onto their team." Turning to Harry, he addressed him. "It will be down to you Harry. You need to show them what a seeker is made of, that it has nothing to do with a rich father. You need to get that snitch before Malfoy or die trying, Harry, because we have to win today. We have to show that skill can out play fast brooms. That you need skill to win the cup."

"So no pressure then Harry," Fred said.

The fourteen players both walked out onto the pitch to the Gryffindors' cheers and the Slytherins' boos as they lined up, ready to start the match. Harry mounted his broom ready to play in one of the most difficult matches. He just hoped Dobby had not fixed the bludger.

On the sound of Madam Hooch's whistle fourteen brooms rose up into the air, all seven Nimbus Two Thousand and Ones accelerating faster than the Gryffindor broomsticks. Just as Harry levelled out, a bludger came shooting straight at him.

Ducking, Harry watched the bludger sail past his head. "Please don't turn, please don't turn," Harry said in his head, begging for something to go his way for once. Harry was pleased to see that the

Bludger went off towards a Slytherin chaser. Harry was glad that Dobby had not done the rogue Bludger trick this time. Something was going his way for once.

Harry turned to fly into the other direction when he heard the sound of the other Bludger coming straight at him. Barrel rolling out of the way, the Bludger screamed past him. Harry watched as his happiness depleted when the Bludger turned in a circle and once again shot at him.

"Damn you, Dobby," Harry cursed as he pushed himself flat on the broomstick and zoomed off in the other direction. George was holding his beater ready to hit it away and Harry ducked as he swung the club at the Bludger and knocked it towards one of the Slytherin chasers.

"That was close Harry, watch out next time," George shouted to him.

"Err George, I suggest you duck..." Harry said and George ducked just in time for the Bludger to go over his head and Harry had to swerve in order for it not to hit him. Harry streaked across the pitch towards the other end where Fred was waiting for him. If only he could cast the counter jinx, but bringing wands onto the field was illegal. If he was found with a wand on him the game would be forfeited. Moreover, Harry could not wandlessly do the counter jinx. If he did that, he would have lots of explaining to do. Most important, he would be asked how he could do wandless magic.

Fred smacked the Bludger as hard as he could away from Harry. "That's done it!" he shouted.

"Don't think so Fred," Harry warned, as the Bludger once again turned in midair and aimed for Harry again. For ten minutes Harry, Fred and George flew close together trying to stop the Bludger hitting Harry.

"Someone's bloody tampered with this Bludger," Fred hissed out in frustration as he swung his bat at the Bludger for the one thousandth time.

"We need a time out," George said signalling to Wood.

"No guys just leave it and leave me; I can take care of it," Harry said. However, Wood had already called for the timeout and Harry heard Madam Hooch's whistle blow so they dived down the ground with the Bludger still trying to hit Harry.

"What is going on?" Wood said, "We're being flattened! Fred, George what the hell were you two doing when that Bludger hit Angelina to stop her from scoring?"

"We were about thirty feet above her stopping the other Bludger murdering Harry, Oliver!" George retorted angrily. "That Bludger has been tampered with. It has not left Harry alone all game. It has not gone for anyone else either. It just keeps going after Harry. Slytherins must have done this."

"The Bludgers have been kept in the office since last practice, nothing was wrong then," Wood said worryingly.

"Then just leave me alone and let me deal with the rogue Bludger," Harry said. "You know I fly well, I can handle it. I told Fred and George to leave me alone up there just before you called for time out."

"What's going on?" came the voice of Ginny. She had come down from the stands from where she was watching the match.

"Nothing Ginny. Come on, we need to get back out," Harry said.

"You're going back!" Ginny cried. "But what about the Bludger? Someone has obviously made it come after you! I bet it's Malfoy."

"Neither Malfoy or the Slytherins have the brains to do that Ginny. I'll be fine," Harry assured her as Madam Hooch started walking over to them. "Oliver, tell Fred and George to leave me alone and let me deal with it on my own."

"Don't be thick," Fred said. "You'll be dead within a minute."

"Harry," Ginny pleaded. "Please don't go back out there."

"I'm not going to die," Harry said heatedly. "Ginny," he added soothingly to stop her from worrying, "I'll be completely fine. You can trust me right?"

"I don't want you hurt," she said quietly.

"Its Quidditch Ginny, everyone gets hurt sometime or another," Harry said.

"Getting hurt is one thing. Getting killed is another, Harry," Fred said.

"Bloody hell, I'm not going to die," Harry said. "Stop saying things that you know will upset Ginny."

"I'm not a baby, Harry," Ginny said folding her arms. "I'm sorry that I care so much for you that I don't want you hurt."

"Listen, I can take care of it," Harry said, very frustrated now. "Wood, believe me. Tell them to leave me alone."

Wood looked into Harry's eyes, concentrating and thinking. "Ready to resume play?" Madam Hooch asked when she reached them.

"Oliver, this is mad. Let's ask for an enquiry." Angelina said.

"No. We ask for that we have to forfeit," Harry said getting angry. "And I will not forfeit. I can take care of the Bludger on my own."

Wood sighed. "Fred, George, leave Harry alone. Let him deal with the rogue Bludger."

Back up in the air, Harry dived and twisted to avoid the Bludger. It was getting very annoying and Harry's decision to not to show his wandless magic was close to breaking. He zoned out the laughter from the Slytherin end, deciding to concentrate purely on the Bludger.

Just as the Bludger narrowly missed another shot at Harry, he saw Malfoy going into a dive. Harry shot straight after him. However, the speed between the Nimbus Two Thousand and the Two Thousand and One was obvious. He could not catch up with him. With silent horror, he saw Malfoy reach out his hand and saw his fingers close around the small form of the golden snitch. Harry stopped what he was doing not concentrating; his only thought was seeing the golden snitch enclosed in Malfoy grotty hands. He had lost. He had never lost to Malfoy before. He could not believe what he was seeing. His



moment of hesitation of seeing Malfoy catch the snitch opened the door to allow the Bludger to strike. Harry heard the whooshing of the Bludger and the feeling of it pounding into his skull before the blackness of unconsciousness swallowed him whole.

-oOoOoOo-

Harry woke up in the darkness of the hospital wing with a headache beyond that of which he had ever felt before. He was not sure what was wrong with him. Harry reached towards the side table and with his free arm, glad that at least he had the function of both of them this time around. Putting on his glasses he finally saw Dobby at the end of his bed.

"Harry Potter is awake sir," he said astonished. Shaking his head Dobby continued. "Harry Potter came back to school sir. Dobby tried to get him to miss the train but Harry Potter saw through. Oh sir, why are you so determined to come back here sir. Why didn't Harry Potter heed Dobby and stay at home."

"Because I am needed here," Harry said through gritted teeth. Ignoring the continuous thumping his head was doing. "There's more going on than you think Dobby, and I wish I could tell you something to make you not worry so much. However, if your master ever found out you knew secrets of mine he would force you to tell them. I cannot and will not risk that."

"But it is dangerous here, Harry Potter sir." Dobby said. "Harry Potter might be needed here sir, but Harry Potter is needed to be alive more sir. Harry Potter must go home sir. Dobby thought his Bludger would be enough... it should have been enough. Dobby does not really understand how Harry Potter is awake."

"You have your secrets and I have mine," Harry said. "I am not going anywhere."

"Ah but sir..." Dobby said strenuously trying to get Harry to see his point. "If Harry Potter only knew," he stated, tears starting to come down his cheeks. "If he knew what he means to us. The lowly, the enslaved, us dregs of the magical world. Dobby remembers what it was like when He Who Must Not Be Named was at the height of his powers, sir! We house elves were treated like vermin sir. Of course, Dobby is still treated like vermin sir, but for the rest of our kind, our

life has improved. Harry Potter survived, and the Dark Lord was broken. A new dawn arose, sir, and Harry Potter shone like a beacon of hope for our kind to those that thought that the dark days would never end. However, dark times are to return to Hogwarts this year, perhaps already returned. Dobby must not let Harry Potter stay here now that history is to repeat itself. Now that the Chamber of Secrets has been opened again once more..."

Horror struck at what he just revealed, Dobby grabbed the empty water jug from Harry's bedside table and began to hit himself with it. "Bad Dobby... Very Bad Dobby," he screamed.

"Dobby stop!" Harry commanded grabbing the water jug and tearing it away from him. "Be quiet before you wake up Madam Pomfrey. You don't want anyone to know you're actually here do you?" Dobby shook his head. "Like I said, I know more than you think. I knew that the Chamber of Secrets had been indeed, opened before. You didn't tell me anything I didn't already know."

"Then you know how dangerous this is Harry Potter. Do you know what happened before the culprit was caught Harry Potter?" Dobby asked.

"The culprit was never caught. Hagrid never opened it, he was framed," Harry said.

"Then you do know more than you let on. Oh, Harry Potter sir. If you know the full danger that this is then why are you persisting on staying here. Go home where you will be safe. Go home Harry Potter. Go home," Dobby said.

"I am not about to leave when Hermione and Ginny..." Harry said but stopped when he heard the sound of footsteps coming towards the hospital wing.

Dobby looked at him in wonder. It was obvious he knew it was Ginny. He looked at Harry in complete shock before remembering the footsteps coming towards the hospital wing. "Dobby must go!" Dobby said breathlessly. "Be safe." With that, he disappeared with a loud crack.

At that time, the doors to the hospital wing burst open and in came Dumbledore and McGonagall carrying in the petrified form of Colin Creevey.

"Get Poppy," Harry heard Dumbledore say to McGonagall. Harry slowly leaned down into his bed and pretending to be asleep. Both Dumbledore and McGonagall were too busy carrying Colin to notice that Harry was awake.

McGonagall came back into the ward followed closely by Pomfrey in her nightcap. "What happened?" Pomfrey asked.

"Another attack," Dumbledore said. "Minerva found him on the stairs."

"We think he was coming up here to visit Potter," McGonagall said. "The whole Gryffindor house is shocked by what happened this afternoon. Especially Potter's close friends. Is there any news on Potter?"

"None more than there was this evening, Unconscious and most likely not to return to consciousness for at least two weeks, maybe three," Madam Pomfrey said. She looked down at Colin. "So he's petrified like Mrs Norris?"

"Yes," Professor McGonagall answered her. "But it was lucky that I wanted some hot chocolate. If he were left there alone all night, who knows what would have happened. How is this happening Albus? What does this mean? What do we tell the staff?"

"We tell them the truth. Tell them that Hogwarts is no longer safe, that it is as we feared. Tell them that the Chamber of Secrets has been indeed, opened again," Dumbledore answered.

"But Albus... surely... who?" McGonagall stammered.

"The question, Minerva, is not who," Dumbledore answered. "The question is how..."

-oOoOoOo-

After a further ten minutes the three grown-ups fussed over Colin before heading back to bed. Dumbledore was the last to leave. He looked over to where Harry lay pretending to sleep.

"I surely hope you know what you are doing Harry," He said quietly.

"I hope so too," Harry whispered to himself.

Five minutes later Harry was just about to drop off to sleep when Estelle flamed into the hospital wing.

"Harry!" she shouted into his mind causing Harry to bolt upright.

"Bloody hell Estelle," Harry said to her. "Where's the fire?"

"Harry!" came a loud hiss from Simon from the floor causing Harry's head to feel yet again like it was going to explode.

"Bloody hell guys," Harry said putting his head into his hands. "Can you shout just a little bit quieter?"

"Harry it's Ginny," Simon said to him gently and Harry stopped thinking about his headache and straightened considerably.

"Harry, Ginny needs your help," Estelle said quietly. "She's in the common room right now. Harry, she needs you right now."

"What...?" Harry said confused.

"Go to Ginny now Harry," Simon said. "She needs you."

Harry, trusting his companions, got out of bed and hurriedly got dressed. He walked as quickly as his body or head would allow him so it took a little longer than normal to get to the Gryffindor common room. As he came towards the Fat Lady she looked relieved to see him. "Oh thank god you're alright. I would bore you to death but you need to get in here."

Confused as hell he walked into the common room looking for Ginny. He spotted her by the common room fire. She looked terrible. Her clothes were loosely hanging from her body and her hair was all over the place. She had dark black bags under her eyes and she looked like she had not slept properly in weeks. Her body was

physically shaking and her sobs were coming out thick and fast. Taking hesitant steps, he approached her.

"Ginny?" Harry asked gently causing her sobbing to stop abruptly. She looked at Harry in shock, her face showing fear and unhappiness.

"Ginny?" Harry asked gently again, as he walked slowly towards her. As he got close, he knelt down besides her and looked into her emotion-filled brown eyes which clearly showed how scared and vulnerable she was feeling. She continued to stare silently at Harry. Taking her hand, Harry tucked back the hair that had fallen around the front of her face to show her face clearly. "Ginny?" He asked one more time. At last, she answered.

"Harry." She whispered so quietly that Harry could hardly hear her. She sobbed once more before continuing. The voice she used made her sound so scared, so lost compared to the normal, confident Ginny that he knew and loved, that it shocked him to the core. "Harry" she said one more time. "Help me..."

A/N: he he, so you like the cliffhanger no? no, you don't... oh erm, then can you promise that you don't kill me and allow me to write the next chapter so you all know what happens next? You hold no promises? Okay then, I suppose that's fair. Let us just hope I write the next chapter before you people find me.

Secondly now that the cliffhanger is out of the way. In regards to Colin. I want to put it in the story how he managed to get petrified without the camera, but just in case I don't manage to get that in. he saw the basilisk eyes from a mirror hanging on the wall on the stairs between the first and second floor corridor. The reason he was out of bed was too of course see Harry. But because Colin wants to be a proper friend now, not because of him being famous, he has gone away and thought about what Harry said in chapter called the fake professor. And he just wanted to check on Harry friend wise, hence no camera.

Other than that. That is it. I hope you all enjoyed. And now I'm going to go have a 2 month break so you guys don't know what happens next... oh you don't like that? I suppose you would not. you say you will hire out a trained assassin? Oh erm... I am hurrying writing the next chapter for you. :-). Seriously, I will start writing the next one

about 2 days after I have finished writing this one, which means I will probably have it all written before you get this. So you would not have too long to wait hopefully. Cheerio!

Disclaimer: I Do Not Own Harry Potter

Last time...

Confused as hell he walked into the common room looking for Ginny. He spotted her by the common room fire. She looked terrible. Her clothes were loosely hanging from her body and her hair was all over the place. She had dark black bags under her eyes and she looked like she had not slept properly in weeks. Her body was physically shaking and her sobs were coming out thick and fast. Taking hesitant steps, he approached her.

"Ginny?" Harry asked gently causing her sobbing to stop abruptly. She looked at Harry in shock, her face showing fear and unhappiness.

"Ginny?" Harry asked gently again, as he walked slowly towards her. As he got close, he knelt down besides her and looked into her emotion-filled brown eyes that clearly showed how scared and vulnerable she was feeling. She continued to stare silently at Harry. Taking her hand, Harry tucked back the hair that had fallen around the front of her face to show her face clearly. "Ginny?" He asked one more time. At last, she answered.

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Harry was stock still, stunned as Ginny said those words and his heart broke hearing them. All of a sudden, Ginny threw herself at Harry and cried. He wrapped his arms protectively around her and rubbed her back soothingly as he tried to get her to calm down. He was in complete shock.

How could she transform from the normal confident Ginny he saw this morning to the fragile, terrified form which he now held in his arms, sobbing uncontrollably against his chest? Within a minute, his shirt was soaked from the tears cascading down Ginny's cheeks and it did not look like she was going to stop anytime soon. Carefully he waved his hand at both of the staircases, casting a privacy charm on

them. It would not be good if someone heard her and came down in the middle of this.

Carefully, he moved himself and Ginny over to the closet couch and he collapsed onto it, letting Ginny pour her tears onto him. Harry sat there with her, comforting her, for what seemed like hours and when he looked at the clock, he realised it had been. It was now three in the morning; Ginny had been crying her heart out non-stop for two hours. Harry hated seeing her like this— he never realised it had effected her this badly. The normal fun loving Ginny was nowhere and in her place was a scared, lonely little girl on the verge of a massive break down, if she was not having it already.

"Harry," Ginny whispered. "I'm so scared." Her voice cracking as she said this. Harry had only seen her like this once before. Remembering when she had been this bad did not help the matters. Harry remembered the night The Burrow had burned to the ground, killing all of Ginny's family apart from Ron who was with them at the time. Ginny had broken down on Harry, terrifying him out of his wits. She had been so helpless and Harry could not help her. Of course, he had tried. He never left her side for weeks after, afraid that She would break down helplessly again. Ginny eventually managed to continue on, but was never the same again.

"It's alright Gin," Harry reassured her, "its okay Gin. I am here. There's nothing to worry about."

"There is," Ginny croaked out in between sobs. "God Harry, I'm so confused. I'm so scared. I do not know what to do."

"Tell me what's wrong," Harry said, even though he knew he wanted her to tell him. She could not hold something like this to herself, especially if it was affecting her this badly.

"I c-can't," she stammered as more and more tears came down her cheeks.

"Yes you can. Please tell me," Harry said as he held her in a hug.

"You'll hate me," Ginny whispered out.

"I could never hate you Ginny," he said as he wiped a tear from Ginny's cheek, looking deep into her eyes. "No matter what has



happened or what will happen in the future, I will never hate you. Never."

"You promise," Ginny whispered.

"Tell me what's wrong," Harry prodded her.

"Well I think... that is..." Ginny started. "Oh, Harry, I'm so scared."

"I know that, tell me what's wrong, please," Harry begged her.

Ginny bowed her head, gazing at her tiny hands wrapped in his, resting lightly on tear-stained lap. "It's... well... I've been having blank stops... and it's just... well..."

"Ginny it's alright. I am right here and I am not going anywhere," Harry told her trying to give her confidence.

"Well it's just that—" Ginny stopped, fighting for words to come to her. "Well it's that— oh Merlin, Harry, I think I'm the one behind the attacks. I think I'm the one attacking people." Harry looked at her. She had confessed.

Maybe he did not think this through properly. For one thing, he did not know that it would affect her this bad. In addition, this was before she knew what was really happening— before she knew that it was Voldemort.

"Harry, I don't want to— I don't want to attack people. Please believe me— please don't hate me." Ginny added quickly before Harry could say anything, "Help me, I need you, please."

"What makes you think you're attacking people Ginny?" Harry asked her quietly. "What makes you think you're the one behind these attacks? And who said anything about attacking people, only Filch's cat has been attacked."

"You're wrong Harry. I know about Colin and that he was attacked. I attacked him... I didn't mean to. I do not even know how... but I'm the one who opened the Chamber of Secrets. The night Mrs Norris was attacked; I can't remember what I was doing...woke up with blood all down my jumper and trousers... had to sneak into the

common room and up to my room before you noticed me," Ginny explained.

"But I would have noticed..." Harry began.

"I was using your invisibility cloak... don't even know how I got it. ...just woke up in an abandoned hallway with it. I was walking back when I overheard about the attack. Whenever Hagrid's roosters had been attacked, I've had blank spots in my memory. I woke up one morning with rooster feathers in my bed. I didn't have any idea how they got there."

"And tonight..." Ginny said looking down, "...I woke up about two corridors away from Colin. Actually saw McGonagall and Dumbledore carrying him to the hospital wing. Why am I attacking people Harry? I don't want to. It's not my fault. Please believe me," Ginny said the last sentence as she looked up deep into Harry's eyes. "Please."

"I believe you," Harry assured her, Ginny sighed as she laid her head against his chest. "I know you Ginny. You wouldn't attack anyone out of your own free will—I know you."

"Help me," Ginny whispered again.

"I will, in every possible way. Don't worry about it, Ginny. I'll help you," Harry said. Within five minutes, he could hear her steady breathing, telling him that Ginny had fallen asleep.

Lying back so that he was comfortable, he settled down to go to sleep too, taking one more look at Ginny in his arms. "No matter what," Harry said, "No matter what it means. Tomorrow I will find the diary. And I'm going to take it away from you." Waving his hand towards the stairwells he released the privacy charms.

-oOoOoOoOo-

Harry woke up and the first thing he noticed was the missing body of Ginny, which wasn't in his arms. Looking around the common room, he saw nothing. Looking out of the window, he saw the sun just above the horizon. He liked it when it was dawn, it was quiet and peaceful. When the war was going on, he used to wake up at this time especially; it was the only time that was still truly peaceful. He

looked towards the Girls stairwell, wondering if Ginny had gone up there. Why did she run off though? Harry wondered as he stretched. Getting up, his gaze passed the window again and stared. It was dawn. That meant Madam Pomfrey would be checking on him any minute. Not wanting to know what the matron's reaction would be if she found out that he snuck out late last night he called Estelle to take him back.

She dropped him off near around the corner from the hospital wing and Harry walked around the corner to find Dumbledore and Sirius standing at the entrance of the hospital wing. Harry wondered why they were standing there and not going in when he slowly approached them.

"Madam Pomfrey said Harry would be out for a month?" Sirius asked Dumbledore, looking at the hospital wing.

"Unfortunately, yes," Dumbledore said. He too, was looking at the door. "But he should be back up and running for the last two weeks of term."

"Cool!" Harry exclaimed, causing both adults to turn and look at Harry in complete wonderment. "I get to miss four weeks of lessons."

"Harry...?" Sirius started slowly.

"No, I'm Snape in disguise," Harry drawled. "Did Pomfrey really say I would be out for a month? Albus old friend, I think you might need a new matron. Although I am the only one who she seems to misdiagnose so maybe you will want to keep her. I'm not exactly normal now, am I?"

"Harry," Dumbledore said now smiling. "How are you feeling?"

"Fine and dandy," Harry answered. "If you don't count this splitting headache I've got and how tired I am."

"May I ask why you are out of bed?" Albus asked.

"Later. Right now, I need to sneak back into bed without Pomfrey noticing," Harry said, as he quietly opened the door and tiptoed towards his bed.

"MR. POTTER!" came Pomfrey's voice from her office. "What on earth are you doing?"

"I went for a little stroll around the lake. Stretch my legs or so," Harry said shrugging, quickly making something up on the spot. Madam Pomfrey looked thrown for a moment before she rounded on him.

"What do you think you were doing? Taking a stroll!" she demanded. "You weren't meant to be awake for another month. How on earth you are walking about and talking, I do not know."

"Well... I'm special." Harry said smiling. "Does this mean I don't have to stay here long?"

"Get to bed please, Mr. Potter," Madam Pomfrey said, a little more kindly this time.

"You didn't answer my question," Harry retorted, as he walked over to his bed and laid on it.

"I will check you over before I say anything," Madam Pomfrey said whilst she started to take his temperature. After half an hour, she grew frustrated. "I do not know how you have gotten better so quickly Potter. However, I don't see anything wrong with you. However, I would like to keep you in the hospital wing for a week to be on the safe side."

"What? If nothing is wrong with me, why should I have to stay here? Why can't I leave?" Harry said.

"I don't know how you managed to heal so quickly," Madam Pomfrey said. "And I would like to find out. Moreover, I'm not entirely convinced you are better. Even if you do look like it, people don't start walking about the next day after getting the type of injury you had."

"So you are going to confine me to the hospital wing just because you don't know something. Can I ask how is that fair?" Harry said getting annoyed. "Why should I have to stay here if nothing is wrong? Why do I have to stay because you don't understand something? Just because you don't know something, doesn't mean I'm ill. Let me leave."

"Mr. Potter, surely you understand. What happens if you suddenly fall ill again? What would you do?" Madam Pomfrey asked.

"I hang around with Ginny and the others all the time," Harry said. "They'll bring me here straight away."

"What about during the night, hmm?" Madam Pomfrey asked eyeing Harry. "What if something happens to you during the night when they are all asleep?"

Harry stayed quiet for a moment before the answer came to him. He didn't like it but he knew the art of compromising. "What if I sleep here?" Harry asked her and she looked thoughtful at the suggestion. "What if during the day you let me out to go to lessons and hang out with my friends and say around nine o'clock in the evening I come here to stay the night?"

Madam Pomfrey looked like she was thinking about it long and hard. "People don't just wake up from that sort of injury the very next day Mr. Potter."

"But I'm fine," Harry pleaded.

"Madam Pomfrey," Dumbledore said, stepping in. "He would be under the watchful eyes of staff and his friends during the day and he would be here at night."

Madam Pomfrey looked at Harry making up her mind. "Make it eight, Potter. You come here at eight in the evening. And you stay here all night. No sneaking out. Understand?"

"Deal," Harry said.

-oOoOoOoOo-

Harry walked towards Moaning Myrtle's bathroom. He desperately wanted to find Ginny but it was empty; no one was in there. Harry went back to the common room. She wasn't there either. Wondering where she could be, he headed out again; he needed to find her. Harry wanted to check the Great Hall in case she was having a late breakfast.

Coming down the main stairwell to the entrance hall, he saw Wood and the rest of the Gryffindor Quidditch team hanging about. Getting closer he overheard the conversation.

"He said he could handle it." Wood said to Angelina who was looking at him furiously.

"Just because Harry said he could doesn't mean he could. Look where he is now; knocked out in the hospital wing with a fractured skull and most probably out for a month." Katie shot back.

Harry was just about to say something to announce his presence when there was a loud drawl coming from the dungeons.

"Well if it isn't the losers," Malfoy said, coming towards them. Harry snuck behind Fred and George so Malfoy couldn't see him. He was surprised that no one had noticed him yet. "So how's Saint Potter—doing well? I nearly laughed my head off when he was doing those rolls over the place."

"You son of a bitch," George said striding towards him, but Katie held on to him.

"I saw that Potter's Tart was upset," Draco said. Harry prayed that he wasn't talking about Ginny because if he was then he would definitely get a pummeling. "She was so ghostly white. How's she doing? I always knew that something was going between him and the little Weaslette."

Fred and George went to pounce but were held back by the others. However as no one knew Harry was there no one was prepared to hold him back. Harry moved in a flash as he launched himself at Malfoy and felt his fist hit Malfoy's jaw and Malfoy hit the ground.

"I hope you have a broken jaw Malfoy." Harry said icily, "I should really do more to you. However, I just got out of the hospital wing and I'm not really in the mood for it."

"Potter!" Malfoy hissed out jumping up off the floor and brandishing his wand.

"Go on, Malfoy, take a shot," Harry growled out. "You'll be disarmed and stunned before you even mutter a syllable of a spell."

"Bold words, Potter." Malfoy sneered, aiming his wand at him.

"Do you really want to try my patience, Draco?" Harry hissed out, "Because at the moment it's on thin ice and when that breaks you will have no idea what hit you."

"Mr Potter! Mr Malfoy!" Came McGonagall's voice from the top of the stairs. "What on earth is happening here?"

"Malfoy was just leaving." Harry answered coldly, his gaze never leaving Malfoy's face.

"Mr. Malfoy, I suggest you move on before I have to deduct points." McGonagall said to him. After Malfoy had left she turned towards the others.

"May I ask what you are doing out of the hospital wing, Potter?" McGonagall asked him.

"I'm allowed to be out. I cracked a deal with Madam Pomfrey. Because she couldn't find anything wrong with me and according to her tests I am completely healthy, I'm allowed out of the hospital wing during the day. However, I need to go back to her at eight o'clock every evening and stay there for the night so that she can make sure I'm really okay." Harry explained.

"Oh... well... in that case, Harry, I'm so pleased you're doing well. When we all saw what happened— well anyway it's good to see you up and about so soon afterwards." McGonagall said, "Now if you'll excuse me I have some papers to grade." And with that, she walked off towards her office.

"Well..." Fred said, causing Harry's attention to go back to the team.

"Malfoy never learns does he?" Harry said shrugging.

"No he doesn't," George said angrily, "I think a specific prank for him might be in the cards."

"Well, let me and Ginny be in on it too," Harry said. "The Ghosts of the Marauders are a team after all."

"Wait, Ghost of the Marauders... that's you four?" Alicia asked. Harry nodded and she shrugged. "Should have worked that one out ages ago really, shouldn't of we. I mean Fred and George are pranksters. Ginny is their sister so that's not surprising. And you, well you're just you."

"Thanks... I think." Harry said confused. "Err, guys. I'm sorry about not getting the snitch—"

"You're sorry about not getting the snitch!" Katie said, "Harry, you gave us all a scare when that Bludger hit you. Don't worry about not getting the snitch. We've asked for an inquiry about it. Bludgers should never go after just one person. Everyone in the crowd knew it only went after you. The Slytherins deny tampering with it but we all know they did."

"So you didn't listen to me when I told you that I don't think it's them?" Harry asked. "I actually know who it was. It wasn't the Slytherins. They won. They didn't tamper with that Bludger. So how ever hard it is for me to say it, we lost to them, fair and square. They didn't tamper with that Bludger, so they shouldn't have their win taken away from them. All we can do is to hope to win our next two games with a big enough margin to win the cup."

"You know who it was?" Wood asked.

"Yes and there's nothing you can do about it." Harry said shrugging. "Do any of you know where Ginny is though? I really need to talk to her."

"She's in the library with Hermione, Ron, and Neville," George told him.

"Thanks," Harry said and he hurried off..

He entered the library and Madam Prince gave him a surprised look before Harry continued off to find his friends. He noticed the four of them in the back away from prying eyes, surrounded by textbooks. As Harry walked towards them, he never took his eyes off Ginny. He was confused as hell; she was acting normal. She was laughing having fun, very much unlike her attitude last night. How could she go from the Ginny he saw before him now to the distraught and



terrified Ginny, he saw the prior night? Then be normal again as if it never happened.

"Can we take a break please?" Ron moaned out.

"Homework is important, Ronald." Hermione snapped at him.

"We should be seeing if Harry is okay rather than being stuck in here," Ginny said.

"What and just sit there and do nothing?" Hermione said, "How is that helping him?"

"Then why don't we start the Polyjuice potion?" Neville asked, "So we can get Malfoy chucked out."

"Because we need to get these in for tomorrow. We can do these essays then go start the potion." Hermione explained.

"My homework doesn't need to be in tomorrow." Ginny said.

"And what are you going to do in the mean time?" Hermione asked her.

"Making sure Harry is okay!" Ginny said.

"He's going to be out for nearly a month. You would be just wasting time sitting there doing nothing," Hermione explained.

"Yeah, but I bet it's better sitting in here doing nothing, don't it Gin?" Harry said sitting down at the table, causing all four of them to look at him in wonderment. "You know, that look is what Sirius and Dumbledore gave me this morning. As well as Malfoy, McGonagall and the Quidditch team too. Is something on my face or what? The Bludger didn't mess up my good looks did it?" Harry said sarcastically. "Gin, please tell me I still look okay?"

"You're up," Gin whispered out.

"Yeah, I'm fine Gin. You don't need to worry," Harry said smiling at her.

"How?" Hermione said.

"I'm supposed to know that because?" Harry asked her. "Remember I was unconscious. How was I meant to know what was happening?"

"Do you actually remember anything?" Ron asked.

"Not really. I remember flying and then Malfoy going into a dive to catch the snitch and then waking up in the hospital wing in the middle of the night," Harry said. He looked at Ginny to see whether it would get a reaction out of her but she just seemed to take it like the others. 'Last night did happen didn't it?' Harry suddenly thought. About seven hours ago, she was having a massive breakdown and now she's completely normal. How could that be? He didn't understand it one bit.

"Anyway I got some news for you. I guess you guys know about Colin being attacked last night. Well I overheard Dumbledore and Professor McGonagall talking." From there he told them everything he heard. He also told them about Dobby's visit.

"So it's been opened before?" Hermione asked frowning.

"That settles it. Malfoy senior must have opened it when he came to Hogwarts and told Draco how to do it. And who is this Dobby?" Ron asked.

"Oh yeah, I haven't told you about him," Harry said. "He came to me in the summer, begging me not to come back to Hogwarts. He said there was a plot to make terrible and evil things happen here at Hogwarts."

"The Chamber of Secrets? Does that mean he knows who is doing it?" Hermione said eagerly.

"No he didn't say anything along the lines of who is doing it on either visit. However, it was him that fixed the Bludger, not a Slytherin," Harry said. "Apparently he wanted me sent home."

"Why?" Neville asked, "You're not a Muggleborn, you're not in danger. Although I suppose you did have trouble doing magic last year so you might be counted along the way of a squib like Filch." Harry just shrugged.

"So Dobby said it was open before?" Ron said thinking. "That's possible. Lucius Malfoy must have opened the chamber when he came here and now has told Draco how to. Didn't Dobby have any idea what monster was down there Harry?"

"If he did, he didn't say," Harry said.

"It's strange isn't it?" Ron said, thinking. "A huge, great big monster attacking people. Someone must have seen it."

"Maybe it can turn invisible," Hermione said thinking. "I have read about chameleon ghouls that can look like the background, very hard to spot."

"Hermione you read too much," Ginny smirked getting up. "I need another book," she said as she walked off between the shelves.

Harry went to turn to listen to what Hermione was saying next when something struck him. Ginny said she didn't have any homework for tomorrow. Then why would she go get another book? Studying wasn't Ginny's thing.

Getting up he followed Ginny along the aisles. When Harry thought they were far enough away Harry called out to her.

"Ginny?" he said causing her to turn around, shocked.

"Harry?" Ginny said confused. "What's up? You sure you're okay after yesterday."

"I was just about to ask you the same thing," Harry told her.

"Me? Why?" Ginny asked confused.

"Last night?" Harry prodded her. "The common room?" he added quietly.

"What about the common room?" Ginny said as she took a book down from the shelf.

"Why are you pretending that it didn't happen Ginny? How can you go from breaking down on me last night to being normal now?" Harry asked her.

"Breaking down on you?" Ginny said giving him a weird look. "Why would I do that? Maybe you're not as healthy as you think. With that Bludger to your head you might have been hallucinating—"

"Ginny, for God sake, stop acting dumb. Last night you practically begged me for help and now you're not letting me help you. You might look fine on the outside but you're breaking apart in the inside. Last night showed me that. I have never seen you so upset Ginny. Please let me help you," Harry pleaded with her.

"You might need to go back to the hospital wing Harry—" Ginny started.

"God damn it," Harry muttered, whipping out his wand. He had thought on how she could look normal from last night. Ginny was always good at acting but he was confused on how she could hide the bag under her eyes and how she could look peaceful.

"Harry... what are you doing?" Ginny said sounding a little worried when Harry brought out his wand.

"I'm sorry Ginny, but it's for your own good," Harry said raising his wand to point it at her.

"Harry, please no!" Ginny said now extremely worried.

"Finite Incantatem," Harry said and the effect it had on Ginny was drastic. Her hair which used to be silky smooth was now all over the place. She had dark black bags under her eyes and it looked like she hadn't slept in weeks. Her clothes were all creased like they had been thrown on in a hurry. Ginny looked like a lost little girl. The image in front of him shocked Harry to the core. He of course had seen her last night but it was dark then. Seeing her like this in full daylight only caused his heart to break more. "Oh god Ginny."

She just stood there like a deer caught in the headlights of a car. Harry stood still for a minute before making up his mind then closed the gap between him and Ginny and pulled her close to him giving her a hug. She initially stiffened at the contact, but only for a second.

She then wrapped her arms around Harry, holding onto him for dear life as tears rolled down her cheeks.

"I didn't know how you would react. I know you were okay with it last night, but that might have just been shock. I was afraid I was going to lose you, Harry," she sobbed. "I can't lose you Harry. I need you. I need you to help me."

"I'm not going anywhere Ginny. I'm going to be here through thick and thin no matter what happens. I'm here for you. I'll never leave you. You're my best friend. I care too much for you to leave you alone when you need me the most," Harry reassured her.

"Thank you," she whispered. "Thank you so much."

"Don't thank me, Ginny." Harry said, "Please don't thank me."

"I will when I want to Harry," Ginny whispered. "And when you deserve it."

"I don't deserve it, Ginny." Harry said, "I'm doing what anyone else would do."

"You're not going to tell, are you?" Ginny whispered, pulling back to look into Harry's face. "They might not understand. How would my brothers react? How would Hermione react? She'll hate me."

"It wasn't you though." Harry told her, "You might have attacked someone but you didn't want to. Someone forced you to against your own will. And Hermione, Colin, your family, and Dumbledore, will all understand that. However, the most important thing at the moment is you and if you don't want to tell anyone then you don't have to. I'll keep it a secret for you."

"You know, I first thought last night was a dream," Ginny whispered out, "I don't know why, I woke up in your arms. You stayed with me all last night. However, when I came back down from the girl's dormitory after getting changed you weren't there. I just thought it was a dream— that's all. When you came down here and started to ask questions about last night I knew it wasn't a dream, but I didn't know how you would react. You're really not leaving me?"

"Never." Harry said, "You're stuck with me."

"You mean the world to me, you know that," Ginny whispered. "I'm so glad I've got you as my best friend."

"Me too, Gin." Harry said, "Me too. Now let's get back to the others. What spell did you use to make you look alright Ginny?"

Ginny stiffened at that sentence. "I was using my glamour potions I got from Fred and George for my birthday. But I used the last one this morning. Harry..." she said looking up to him with fear in her face. "...I can't go out looking like this. They'll know, Hermione will work it out."

"It's going to be okay Gin," Harry said, trying to get her to calm down. "It's going to be okay. Just stand still." Harry said, pointing his wand at Ginny.

"What you doing?" she asked.

"It's a glamour spell," Harry said. "They don't just come in potions you know."

"But I told Hermione about my potions. She said they were really useful because the actual glamour spell is fifth year material. You're not good at magic, Harry. How can you do a fifth year spell?"

"Do you trust me?" Harry asked her.

"With all my heart," Ginny whispered. Harry was thrown with the way she said it, but it didn't really matter.

"Then let me do this." Harry said, pointing his wand at Ginny who nodded as Harry cast the spell on her. In a second, she went back to looking like the fun loving Ginny that he knew.

"Wow," Ginny said. "You really are good at magic."

"Yes," Harry replied, "but I want it kept a secret, Ginny. You know I hate publicity, especially with the whole Boy-Who-Lived thing. The press would have a field day if they knew I could do fifth, sixth, and seventh year spells. I couldn't stand the publicity. Plus Hermione would badger the hell out of me every minute of every day for me to teach her."

"I understand." Ginny said, nodding and then her eyes went wide. "Romania, the warming charm on my jacket."

"I'm sorry Ginny," Harry said to her.

"You lied," Ginny mumbled.

"You heard what Hermione said about that spell, it's fourth year magic," Harry said.

"But you could have told me," Ginny said. "I would keep your secrets. I keep Estelle and Simon a secret. I haven't told anyone about them, not even Tom."

The mention of the diary sent a rush of anger through Harry's veins, although he was clever enough to hide it. He was going to get that diary and destroy it as soon as possible.

"You know now though," Harry told her.

Ginny nodded and then smiled. "During the summer you said you had secrets. I asked if I would learn any of them and you said when the time was right. This was one of those secrets, wasn't it?"

"Yeah," Harry said smiling.

"Could you tutor me, Harry?" Ginny asked.

"But you're good. You've done all your homework; your classes are easy for you," Harry said, confused.

"No. The classes are hard, Harry." Ginny said, "I find them very difficult, but if Hermione knew I was struggling—"

"—She would have you in here twenty-four-seven studying." Harry said nodding, "You could have come to me."

"Why?" Ginny said, "When I didn't know how good you were."

"Fair point," Harry said nodding. "Alright, I'll help you, in every way possible. The first thing we need to concentrate on is making you feel better. The essays, you can forget about them. So we don't

need to worry about homework. I'll get you confident enough to walk around Hogwarts on your own first, without worrying what someone would do to you."

"But what happens when my teachers ask for me to hand in the homework?" Ginny asked, "I won't have anything to hand in."

"Won't you?" Harry said cryptically.

Half an hour later the two of them found themselves alone in Harry's dormitory. Harry grabbed a box from underneath his bed. Near the top edge of the lid there was a slit big enough to put pieces of parchment through.

"You used your present from Fred and George to help with this. And now we'll use Fred and George's present to me for help," Harry said.

"The Automated Essay Writer," wonderstruck, Ginny said.

"You didn't think I would leave this at home did you?" Harry said smiling, "Now what was the title of your first essay? And don't forget to write the length you want."

Twenty minutes later, Ginny was thumbing through all of her essays. "They're...perfect!" Ginny said, her back to Harry.

"See, I told you that you didn't need to worry about them. Any essays you are assigned, just give them to me and I'll put it through this. We just need to keep this from Hermione." Harry added, coming up behind her to look at the essays over her shoulder.

Ginny smiled and leaned back into Harry. He instantly wrapped his arms around Ginny's waist and held her close to him whilst she leaned her head against his chest.

"I don't know what I would do without you Harry," she said, her head rested against his chest.

"Neither do I, but you're never going to find out because I will always be here for you. No matter what." Harry reassured her.

"Harry," she whispered as Harry rested his head on top of Ginny's.



"Yeah, Gin?" Harry whispered back.

"Thank you." Ginny replied.

"Don't mention it," Harry said finally.

A/N: well... surprised? Hopefully you were with Ginny's breakdown. She's going to have a rough few weeks ahead of her I can tell you. However, I think with Harry standing next to her she'll get through it. The only thing Harry is going to worry about now is getting Tom away from Ginny which I'm sure is going to be extremely hard. But I have faith in him? Don't you. Anyway the second year is going to be different from here on out. Because hey no more attacks. :P

Disclaimer: I Do Not Own Harry Potter

Later that evening Harry, Ginny and the others were sitting in the common room. Hermione was currently checking Ginny's essays for mistakes. Obviously, there weren't going to be any since they used the automated essay writer.

"This is brilliant Ginny," Hermione said. "This is excellent. You should get full marks for that. Harry, why can't you follow Ginny's example?"

"I do!" Harry retorted. "I get top marks in all my essays."

"Yes but you don't seem to put the theory into practice in the practical lessons," Hermione said. "Don't get me wrong, you do get a hold of the spell. But it takes a while for you to do so."

"And since when are you in my lessons to see if I put the theory into practice?" Ginny asked her.

"Well I'm not..." Hermione began.

"Then why did you imply that I did. You don't know whether I do or not. You just said that to have a go at Harry," Ginny said, looking at Hermione in the eye.

"Well, he could do some improving," Hermione muttered.

"Maybe yes, maybe no," Ginny said shrugging. "But he's not going to improve with you breathing down his neck all the time. So please back off."

Hermione threw a nasty look at Ginny before handing her essay back and turning her attention to Neville.

"That was brilliant Gin," Harry whispered to her.

"Well you're helping me with... well... you know. I just thought I'd help you too," Ginny explained.

"I'm not doing this to get anything out of it Ginny," Harry told her. "I'm doing this because I care for you."

"What are you two whispering about?" Ron asked, interrupting

"Nothing," Ginny quickly said turning back to her books.

"When do you need to go to the hospital wing Harry?" Neville asked, looking up from a particularly difficult essay Snape had set them.

"I've got to be at the hospital wing at eight," Harry told him.

"But Harry," Hermione began, "it's quarter to eight now. You're not going to get there in time."

"So I'm a little late," Harry said shrugging. "It's not the end of the world."

"But you could get in trouble," Hermione pressed. Harry tried arguing with her but conceded and packed up his stuff and went up to his dorm and put it in his trunk. When he came back down, he saw Hermione going over Ginny's essay once again.

"Hermione, you've already gone over that one once," Ginny moaned at her.

"Yes but I didn't find any mistakes," Hermione said. "There are always mistakes."

"So you're going to go over the essay until you find at least one?" Ginny asked her.

"I don't have to do this you know," Hermione scolded her.

"But you already did it once. And you found no mistakes. Why are we going over it again?" Ginny said, getting annoyed.

"Because there has to be at least one," Hermione muttered. "Even I make at least one mistake."

Harry, suddenly understanding, grew angry with Hermione. "Is it because you just can't comprehend that maybe someone is better than you at something?" he asked her.

"Of course not. You're a lot better at me at flying," Hermione said.

"Yes but you hate flying," Harry said. "Essays and school work is your thing. You just don't want to admit that maybe Ginny is better than you at writing essays. Now stop harassing Ginny. She wrote the essay, you checked it over and found no mistakes. You should be happy for her that she understands it all."

"That's...well..." Hermione spluttered out. "You need to get to the hospital wing."

"And you need to leave Ginny alone. She's written the essay so let her be," Harry said crossing the common room and heading towards the portrait hole.

"Fine," Hermione said handing Ginny back the parchment. Harry looked over his shoulder one more time to see Ginny looking at him. She mouthed "thank you" and Harry nodded his head to tell her he understood before going through the portrait hole and off towards the hospital wing.

As he walked Harry thought about the situation he was in. He needed to find a way to get the diary away from Ginny without her realising that it was him. How he was going to do that he didn't know.

Harry was so involved in his thoughts of taking the diary away from Ginny that it shocked him to find that he was outside the hospital wing fifteen minutes later. As he walked in, Madam Pomfrey made her way towards him.

"You're late," she said, eyeing him up and down to check that he was all right.

"By five minutes!" Harry argued when he looked at the clock that was hanging above Madam Pomfrey's doorway into her office.

"Yes well. How are you feeling?" Madam Pomfrey asked indicating to Harry to follow her.

"Fine," Harry said telling the truth and following her over to the bed he would be staying in that night. "Completely fine actually. I had a headache this morning but it's gone now."

"Well you are still staying here tonight, Potter," she said as she felt the top of his head for his temperature. "That was our agreement."

"Yeah I know," Harry said, sighing as he sat down on the bed.

"We'll you seem okay so I'm going leave you to get changed," Madam Pomfrey said finishing up and heading towards her office. Harry changed and got into the bed. He looked at the clock and noticed that it was only eight thirty and he wasn't even tired. This was actually surprising as he was up half of the last night with Ginny. As Harry's thoughts wandered over her, hoping that she was doing okay, he settled down to spend the night in the lonely hospital wing.

-oOoOoOoOo-

It was around one o'clock in the morning when Harry woke up with a start. He swore that he felt someone moving about in the hospital wing. Looking around though, he didn't see anyone. Harry was just about to go back to sleep when he heard the quiet scraping of a chair moving. He looked at the chair in question which was residing at the end of the bed to see it turn slightly. Confused as hell, Harry wondered if Dumbledore had come into the hospital wing to check up on him.

There was a moment silence before Harry felt a little pressure on the end of his bed, indicating that something else had laid itself on the bed. Harry, wanting to find the underlying cause of it, reached out with his magic to feel the presence around him. He felt the barely there presence of Colin a few beds away and he felt the weak presence that was Madam Pomfrey in her dormitory of the wing. However, at the end of the bed he felt a strong presence of someone he recognised immediately.

"Ginny?" Harry whispered out and he heard a small gasp from the end of his bed. As he watched he saw her pull what obviously was his invisibility cloak from her to reveal her sitting on the chair with her feet rested on the end of the bed. Her face showed the reaction of being shocked.

"How did you know?" she whispered out.

"Magic," Harry replied simply, sitting up looking at her carefully. "What are you doing here Ginny?"

Ginny was quiet for a moment before muttering her answer. "I was scared. I was scared to go to sleep. What happens if I wake up tomorrow and find out that I've attacked someone else? You said you'd watch out for me. I thought that if I slept here that maybe I would be all right because you're watching out for me."

Harry watched her closely. He loved her and it was his fault this was happening to her. Well not anymore, he thought. He was taking that diary away from her as soon as it was possible. It didn't look like she had it on her now so that was good. What was needed was to help Ginny through this anyway possible. If it meant sleeping near him, he wouldn't argue. Heck, she was his wife; he shouldn't have any reasons for Ginny not to sleep near him.

"Ginny, get up and move the chair back where you found it," Harry told her and she looked at Harry disappointed.

"Okay Harry," Ginny said quietly. "I'll go back to the tower." She put the chair back where she found it and made to put the invisibility cloak back around all of herself.

"No Ginny," Harry said. "I didn't say go back to the tower. I just said put the chair back where you found it. You shouldn't sleep on it."

Ginny put it back where she found it before eyeing him and then his bed. "I know I slept in your arms last night Harry. And nothing I'll do will ever repay you for staying with me last night," she said looking thankfully at him then she dropped her head again. "It was nice." She whispered out looking down at her feet. "The best I've slept in ages. But I'm not sure sleeping in the same bed as you is a good idea."

Harry couldn't help but laugh at that. "I wasn't intending for us to sleep in the same bed Ginny," he said, smiling at her and she looked up, blushing deep red for her misunderstanding. "Just stand back from the chair." Harry reached over to the nightstand and grabbed his wand which he flicked towards the chair and it transfigured itself into a camp bed.

"Wow," Ginny said amazed. "You didn't even mutter an incantation."

"I told you I was good," Harry whispered and he waved his wand again and a duvet and pillows appeared on the bed. "Tell me if it's

uncomfortable and I'll change it," Harry told her as she got into the conjured camp bed. Harry lay back down on his bed and Ginny settled comfortably next to him in the camp bed. "I'll wake you up in the morning before Madam Pomfrey comes so you can sneak back to the common room." Harry told her as he closed his eyes to go back to sleep.

"Harry?" Ginny whispered out from her made up bed.

"Yes?" he answered.

"Thank you," Ginny said. "I know I keep saying it but thank you."

"It's no problem whatsoever, Ginny," Harry told her. "I'll see you in the morning."

"Night," Ginny said.

"Night Gin," Harry said and then closed his eyes and drifted off to the realms of dreams.

-oOoOoOo-

Harry woke up early morning just as the sun had risen over the horizon to see Ginny sleeping peacefully in the made up bed on the floor next to him. He didn't really want to wake her but she couldn't stay there and have Madam Pomfrey notice. He gently got out of bed and knelt down beside her, shaking her awake.

"Harry?" Ginny whispered out rubbing her eyes trying to get the sleepiness out of her.

"Hey," Harry said gently. "You need to go before Madam Pomfrey starts making her rounds." Harry said helping her up.

"I'll see you at breakfast?" Ginny asked him whilst he waved his wand towards the camp bed and it changed back into a chair. With another wave of his wand, the pillow and duvet disappeared.

"Of course," Harry said. "Now go."

"But..." Ginny said. "The glamour charm."

"Oh right," Harry said smiling. "Hang on." Harry pointed his wand at Ginny. "Velieris verus vultus" and in an instant the glamour charm took effect.

"If I weren't having trouble with the classes I would ask you to teach me that," Ginny said now looking completely fine and normal.

"I don't get that," Harry said pondering Ginny's problem in practical classes. "You know, you struggling in your classes. You picked up the bat bogey hex fine."

"I don't really know," Ginny whispered.

"Well you need to go before Madam Pomfrey comes and spots you," Harry warned her and Ginny threw him a grateful smile

"I'll be alright getting back right?" Ginny whispered. "What happens if someone is waiting for me to make me attack someone else?"

Harry brought his hand up to her arm to comfort her. "I've got Estelle and Simon watching you. You might not be able to see them... but they are watching you twenty four seven," Ginny's eyes widened at that remark. "Plus, I'll get Peeves to follow you around invisible and there's no doubt in my mind that he will be able to get the portraits to help him keep an eye on you. Therefore, you might not notice anyone, but you will be watched and if anything happens to you I will know in less than a minute."

"That's how you knew to come to the common room. You had Estelle and Simon watching me," Ginny said and then her forehead furrowed. "Hang on, why did you have Estelle and Simon watching me?"

"I didn't have them watching you," Harry said lying. "Estelle likes you as a friend so she watches out for you. I didn't ask her to. Nevertheless, you two seem to get along quite well. So she just wanted to make sure you're alright. She thinks of you as a friend you know."

"Oh," Ginny said. "Thank her for me. I'm not sure what I would have done if she didn't come and get you."



"Thank her next time you see her," Harry whispered. "But you need to go before Madam Pomfrey comes out and spots you."

Nodding, Ginny wrapped the invisibility cloak around herself and headed out of the wing. It was good timing because not a minute later Madam Pomfrey came bustling over to him. She checked him over before sighing, as if she actually wanted to find something wrong with him to make him stay.

However, it seemed like this wasn't the case because ten minutes later Harry found himself heading down to the Great Hall for breakfast. He noticed Ginny and the others eating hungrily.

"What's the rush guys?" Harry asked, sitting down next to Ginny. "I mean we have Potions first don't we? Why would we want to rush off to that?"

"Well you might want to be late to Snape's class. But I don't particularly want to lose points or get into detention," Hermione berated him.

"It's not actually that bad, you should try it sometime." Harry said smiling at her.

"Yes. Says the person who had a detention in the Forbidden Forest where you met Voldemort in there, and then had detention with Lockhart where you helped him answer his fan mail," Neville said.

"What can I say, trouble loves me," Harry said, grinning over his porridge.

"Yes it does," Ginny said agreeing with him. "That's the problem."

-oOoOoOo-

Harry walked into Snape's usual grotty dungeon and sat himself down in the usual place that was at the back of the classroom. The class waited with the normal chit chatter until Snape came gliding into the room.

"Today you will be preparing the deflating draught." Snape said, flicking his wand to the board, making the instructions appear. "It is important that you make this properly as in a couple of weeks time

after these potions have had time to mature we will be testing them... on yourselves."

"You will be making the swelling solution in class and you will use it on yourselves and then you will use your deflating potion you have made today to put yourselves right. The people who make either or both potions wrong won't need to have points deducted as the consequence of taking a wrongly made swelling potion is that the antidote won't work," Snape finished. glaring at them. "Well what are you waiting for? Get to work."

There was the usual hustle and bustle of people getting the ingredients out and the ingredients they needed from the student cupboard, as they got ready to make the potion. "Twenty points from Gryffindor for being too noisy and the next person to speak will have another twenty points deducted."

"That's so unfair," Ron whispered. Harry was working with Ron whilst Neville was working with Hermione. "Slytherins were talking too you know."

"That's twenty points Mr Weasley and twenty points Mr Potter," Snape said from across the dungeon.

"But I wasn't talking!" Harry argued.

"That's another ten points for back chatting," Snape sneered. "You want any more points deducted Potter? No? Then concentrate on making your potion. Fat lot that would do you anyhow. You're too much like your idiotic father. Apart that he knew how to catch the snitch rather than fall off his broom." That caused a round of laughter from the Slytherins which the Gryffindors noticed went un-punished.

Harry, trying to ignore Snape's jibes, concentrated on making the deflating draught. It was easier said than done when Snape was hovering around your cauldron taking points off for every little thing.

"Five points from Gryffindor Mr Weasley," Snape sneered causing Ron to jump. "The instructions say quite perfectly that you add in the ginger root after you take the cauldron off the boil." Ron was just about to add them with the flames still on low.

To say that Harry was glad when the class ended was an understatement. Double Potions was always bad however having to listen to the Slytherins jibe at him for losing the match all lesson wasn't pleasant.

During break they met Ginny in the grounds and hung out with a blue flame in a jar to keep them warm.

"Snape is just an idiotic git," Ginny muttered shivering from the cold. Harry would have loved to warm her up with the warming charm but the others were there so they had to settle for frozen body parts instead. "Taking points off for breathing too loudly. I would complain Harry. You know Dumbledore, go to him and complain about him. Surely, what he's doing isn't right. Maybe we can get him kicked out. Just imagine life without Snape," she said sighing and a smile crossing her face.

"Merlin, that would be nice." Ron muttered.

"What have you got next Ginny?" Hermione asked.

"Herbology," Ginny answered sagging. "It's going to be torture in this weather. I swear it's going to start to snow soon."

"Harry!" came a shout from behind him. He turned to see Wood striding across towards them. "We've got Quidditch practice tonight straight after lessons so don't dawdle once the bell rings. Go get changed and head straight down to the Quidditch pitch."

"Practice in this weather?" Harry moaned. "Wood, its freezing."

"You need to practice in all weathers. It's the sign of a good Quidditch team," Wood explained.

"I'm not sure Madam Pomfrey would let me," Harry said, the idea just coming to him, "I mean I'm still staying the hospital wing at night so she can make sure I'm one hundred percent. She might not let me train out in this weather."

"I thought of that too," Wood said. "I went to see her before I came to you. She said it would be fine. That you're staying in the hospital wing was only procedure and she was thinking of letting you go back

to the common room anyway. There's no lasting damage and you're completely fine now."

"Oh okay Wood," Harry said dismally. "I'll be there."

"Sure Harry," Ginny said once Wood walked away. "Don't get too over excited now."

Groaning, Harry got up off the ground with the others and started to head towards charms, as break was just about to finish. As they got close to the entrance hall, Ginny separated from them and headed down to the greenhouses whilst Harry, Neville, Hermione and Ron entered the castle and went up the stairs towards Flitwick's classroom.

Flitwick usually stood on top of a pile of old books so that he could be high enough to see over his desk to teach. Harry found the look on Hermione's face every time she went into the classroom to see him standing on the books rather amusing.

"Books shouldn't be mistreated like that," Hermione had whispered to himself, Ron and Neville once. "He's a teacher, he should really know better."

As they settled down Professor Flitwick stood up on the books causing a slight scowl from Hermione that Harry had never noticed before. However, it was gone in a flash and he supposed that he never really paid enough attention to her in this particular class before.

Professor Flitwick tapped his wand onto his desk to get the attention of the class. On his desk lay loads of small bowls, full with water

"Today...", Professor Flitwick began, addressing the class. "...we will start on the Drought Charm. This is a rather difficult charm. The most difficult part of it is putting enough power behind the spell to dry up all the water you are wishing too. It should take you at least two, maybe three lesson's to dry up your whole bowl This means at the moment we are wasting time. So let's all come to the front of the class and grab your bowl. Be careful not to spill any of the water."

Once everyone had carefully selected their bowl full of water and took it back to their desk Flitwick continued to address the class.

"The incantation for this specific spell is 'Sitisus'," Flitwick explained. "It needs complete concentration. The wand movements are drawn up on the board. You may begin."

Harry wasn't paying attention to what Flitwick was saying. He was too busy thinking of Ginny, wondering if she was all right on her own in Herbology. Now that he knew how she really was handling things, he couldn't think about anything else. He certainly couldn't concentrate on the spell Flitwick was trying to teach them.

"Mr Potter," Harry heard Professor Flitwick behind him say. Harry jumped a little causing him to bump the table and a little bit of water to splash out of his bowl onto it. "That's five points deducted for not paying attention. However can I still please see you try the spell now that you've had ten minutes of practice?"

Harry still worried about Ginny as he drew his wand and half heartedly waved his wand towards the bowl muttering the incantation. He wasn't paying attention really to the class. He was thinking up ways to get the diary away from Ginny. He needed to do it soon. Surely, it couldn't be very hard. The difficult bit would be after he had taken the diary away and trying not to have the blame put on him. After all, he was the only one who knew of the diary. That Ginny knew of anyway. Destroying it shouldn't be too hard. He could wait one night for everyone to go to bed and then throw it in the fire in the common room. By the morning it would have been burned to ashes and Ginny wouldn't know it was he who took it.

Harry was brought out of his thoughts when he noticed that no one was speaking in the classroom. Turning his attention to the class he noticed that the bowl in front of him was completely empty. He had managed to dry up his whole bowl in one spell. He was too busy thinking about his situation with Ginny that he completely forgot to reel back his magic to make it look like he was struggling. Ron and Neville were staring at him in shock whilst Hermione was frowning, confusion written over her face.

"My, my, Mr Potter," Flitwick said after he found his voice. "That is... well what I mean to say is... Twenty points to Gryffindor for superbly casting that spell. I would add another five on top, as it was you. Not being rude, Harry, but you do rather find spells difficult to cast so I would've added five points as a just award. However, as you weren't

paying attention and only tried it half-heartedly, I'm afraid I have to take five points off you instead. Please pay closer attention next time and try. Now everyone back to work."

As Flitwick moved off after refilling Harry's bowl Hermione rounded on him.

"How the hell did you do that?" Hermione hissed.

"I really don't know," Harry said whispering, acting surprised. Hermione gave him a look that clearly said that she didn't believe him. "Look, I'll try again," Harry said and repeated the process. This time he was concentrating and put hardly any magic behind the spell. The result of the spell was what he intended it to be as hardly any water disappeared.

"See, I really don't know how to do it," Harry said. "It was just a one off."

"I don't believe you. But if you are telling the truth at least we now know you have potential to do it," Hermione said before turning back to her own bowl.

"That was pretty cool Harry," Ron said, "I mean you got Gryffindor fifteen points."

"Yeah," Harry said before turning back to his bowl. He couldn't believe he slipped up like that. He had to be more careful.

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When the bell rang the four of them headed towards the great hall to meet Ginny. Whilst on the way Hermione grilled Harry about the spell.

"Are you sure you don't know how you did it?" she asked for like the hundredth time.

"YES!" Harry shouted causing some Fifth year Hufflepuff passing by to stare at them. "I wasn't thinking about charms at all when I did the spell. I wasn't paying attention."

"Then what were you thinking about?" Hermione asked

Harry remained quiet. Hermione looked at him annoyed. "What were you thinking about?" she asked again when Harry didn't answer.

"Private stuff," Harry said. "So leave it."

"Well I wouldn't have thought that you would keep secrets from your best friends," Hermione replied huffing.

"Some secrets are meant to stay secret Hermione," Harry said annoyed.

"Well it's good to know you don't trust us!" Hermione contoured.

"I do trust you," Harry said. "Just some secrets aren't mine to tell okay."

When they reached the great hall, they found Ginny waiting for them. They had a quick lunch (to the protest of Ron) before heading off to the library. They had a quick discussion about when they would get the ingredients for the Polyjuice potion before starting on some homework. It was decided that Harry and Ginny would get the ingredients they needed to start the potion before afternoon lesson.

In the mean time they sat in the library doing their homework, or trying to in Harry's case. As he sat in front of the Herbology essay he was trying he couldn't help but think about the diary lying in Ginny's bag not five feet away. Hermione, Ron and Neville were off looking for books but Ginny was still at the table. He couldn't risk being caught by Ginny.

If luck would have it, an opportunity presented itself not five minutes later.

Ginny muttered about needing another book and stood up, waiting for Harry to go with her.

"Aren't you coming?" Ginny asked him nervously.

"It's only over there isn't it?" Harry asked her pointing to the row of books that held the book Ginny wanted. "I can see you all the time. And you can look behind you to see me all the time," Harry explained.

"But what if someone...?" Ginny muttered.

"I'll be there faster than you can say Quidditch," Harry told her. "No one is going to make you do anything I promise."

Nodding Ginny started walking over to the stacks of books. A couple of paces away she turned to look at Harry who gave her a reassuring smile. She turned around to continue heading towards the bookshelf and the book she needed.

Taking a cautious look to make sure Ginny wasn't looking he grabbed her bag and started to rifle through it. There was her Defence Against the Dark Arts book in there as well as Herbology and Charms. There were also hair clips and hair bands as well as a t-shirt. Why Ginny was carrying around a t-shirt he will never know. However as he moved the t-shirt his hand knocked something and in the middle of that t-shirt was the diary. His hand closed around it as he finally managed to hold it. It was over now. He had finally had the diary.

"What unearth are you doing?" Madam Pince's voice called out to him and Harry dropped the bag and the diary in shock. "That is not your bag and is someone's personally belongings. Next time I catch you going through someone else's stuff it will be a detention. Do I make my self clear Mr Potter?"

"Yes Ma'am...," Harry said downhearted. He had had his hand on the diary yet failed to get it. He watched Madam Pince walk away, waiting for her to be gone long enough for him to get the diary. Unfortunately, as Madam Prince turned the corner Ginny came hurriedly back.

"Ginny?" Harry asked her concerned.

"I'm alright," Ginny said sitting down next to him. "Just I felt like someone was watching me. That's all. I mean apart from you. I'm probably imagining it. Merlin Harry, I can't even walk a couple of feet away on my own without worrying," she suddenly burst out.

"It's natural Ginny," Harry whispered to her while taking her left hand in his right and squeezing it reassuringly.



"I'm so glad you're here for me Harry. You're the only person I feel safe around. I know nothing can hurt me as long as you're here," Ginny said.

"And I will always be there for you," Harry said to her. Harry then wondered about what she just said about being on her own. "How do you get to classes? I mean you walk there on your own."

"Doesn't mean I'm not scarred." Ginny whispered, her hand still clutched in Harry's. "Every time I'm on my own I can't think of anything else but what if I suddenly find myself attacking someone. I run to the classroom and sit as close to the teacher's desk and just hope the teacher turns up early. The time alone in the classroom is the most scariest time of all. I normally talk to Tom in that time. Tom and you are the only two people that are helping me through this. I don't know what I would do without the two of you. You two are the most important two people in my life at the moment."

"I'm sure nothing will happen to you anymore. I promised you that didn't I?" Harry said to her.

"Yeah you did," Ginny answered as Hermione came back, her arms full of books.

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When it was close to the end of lunch, Harry and Ginny went off to get the potion ingredients out of the student cupboard whilst Hermione and the others went to set up Moaning Myrtles bathroom. As soon as Harry and Ginny turned the corner Ginny's body language changed drastically.

"It's so hard Harry," she said, stopping and whispered to Harry whilst looking into his eyes. "Lying to them and pretending like nothing's wrong. Every time I speak I'm afraid I'm going to give something away and they are going to figure it out."

Harry wrapped his arms around Ginny, pulling her to him. He held her close whilst trying to soothe her. "You're doing great Ginny," he told her gently rubbing his hand gently around her back. "You're doing great."

"But what happens when you're not there? What if I slip up?" Ginny whispered into his chest. "What will they think if they ever find out what I've..."

"Ginny," Harry interrupted her. "They're not going to. I won't let that happen okay." Harry unwrapped his arms from around Ginny's waist and whilst his left hand went up to her arm the other one went up to her cheek. Ginny smiled as Harry rubbed his thumb to clear away a stray tear.

"You are going to be completely fine, I promise you that," Harry whispered gently kissing her on the forehead. "I promised you I would look after you and that is exactly what I'm going to do." He heard Ginny sigh as his lips left her skin.

"How do you do that?" Ginny asked.

"Do what?" Harry asked gently back.

Ginny looked up to him and Harry was pleased to see a smile on her face. "You always know exactly what to say to make me feel better. All my life since I've known you, whenever I get upset, you know just what to do to calm me down."

"The perks of being the best friend," Harry whispered. "I'm sure you would be able to do the same for me."

"I wouldn't be so sure of that," Ginny said, looking down.

"I am," Harry said smiling at her. "All you have to do is be there and I'm sure that will help."

"Really?" Ginny asked.

"Really," Harry said, nodding. "Now let's go get those ingredients."

"But what if Malfoy knows that it's me?" Ginny whispered. "And he tells the others when they're questioning him?"

"How would Malfoy know it's you?" Harry asked her.

"Maybe it's him making me do this I don't know," Ginny answered.

"You think if Malfoy knew it was you he would keep quiet?" Harry asked her. "He hates your family; he would do anything to hurt you. If he knew it was you he would have said something by now."

"But it could be someone in Slytherin. You know what Ron said. They're probably having a good laugh at this in their common room," Ginny said.

"Contrary to popular believe and what Ron say's, not all Slytherins are bad. I grant you most of them are. However, there are some, who are not. Being ambitious doesn't make you evil. I mean are you and me evil?" Harry asked her quietly. "The sporting hat tried to put both of us in Slytherin. And don't ask how I know and don't even ask him if it's true because he will most definitely deny it. It tried to put Percy in Slytherin." Ginny looked shocked at that bit of news. "

"How do you know that?" Ginny whispered.

"Like I said, don't ask me that," Harry replied. "I can't tell you. Not just yet anyway. There's no way that they are going to find out Ginny. I promise you that."

"I'm just worried. I've been looking forward to coming to Hogwarts for so long. You know that. I hated staying at home all last year when you got to come here. I don't want to be chunked out and be forced to stay at home whilst you and my brothers get to come to school and learn."

"That will never happen Ginny," Harry said. "That will never happen. I won't let it. Trust me."

"I do," Ginny whispered. "I do."

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With ingredients weighing his bag down Harry left Ginny at her classroom, telling her not to be worried about him being late because he walked her to her classroom and ran down the stairs to transfiguration. Once he got there, Professor McGonagall was already addressing the class.

"Five points from Gryffindor for being late Mr Potter. Why are you late?" Professor McGonagall said addressing him.

"I got lost?" Harry tried.

"You're not one to be normally be late to class Mr Potter so I was going to let it slide. However as you obviously don't care about being late and don't have any respect to this lesson you will have ten points deducted from Gryffindor and a detention with me," McGonagall said. "Now can you please take your seat? I suppose you can't get lost from the front of the class to the back?"

Harry walked over to his seat and realised that he was going to be working with Hermione. Not that he didn't like working with Hermione, it was actually good sometimes. He could let her do the hard work and make it look to his friends that he didn't know much about magic but still get the marks needed to pass the class.

However this particular time it wouldn't be. After his slip up in charms and the fact that he was late would mean that Hermione would be on his back all lesson. He was so glad that he had Quidditch practice straight after otherwise he would probably hear it all evening from her as well. Hermione didn't disappoint.

"Harry, you're not trying," she said for the thousandth time when Harry failed to do the spell. They were changing a mouse into a water goblet. "Maybe you're not saying the incantation correctly. The pronunciation is 'vera-verto' make the ver nice and long."

"If I wasn't saying it right you would have told me earlier. Just count what happened in charms as a fluke," Harry moaned.

"It wasn't a fluke Harry," Hermione said. "You can do magic. You're just not trying!"

"How would you know?" Harry said a hint of annoyance in his voice.

"Because you did the wand motion for the drought charm perfectly, yet when you tried it the second time you didn't," Hermione said. "I believe you just didn't try the second time or you purposely didn't do it right."

"That's nonsense," Harry said, sweating a little.

"Nonsense or not, you have the capability to do it correctly. So I'm going to make sure you get it right," Hermione explained.

"Oh joy." Harry muttered under his breath.

"What was that?" Hermione asked.

"Nothing." Harry responded before turning his attention back to his mouse, having a glance over to Neville and Ron. Ron cast the spell on his mouse and Harry watched as the mouse started to change shape into water goblet. However the texture of the water goblet stayed the same as the mouse so the water goblet was made out of brown fur and it also had a tail where the handle should have been.

"That was a good try Mr Weasley. However, you need a bit more conviction in your incantation and wand movement. Try again," McGonagall said. She was making her rounds and watched Ron try his attempt. She then came to Hermione and himself.

"Mr Potter I heard from Professor Flitwick that you did quite well in charms today," McGonagall said. "Care to show me what you can do here?"

Harry nodded pointed his wand at the water goblet and did the wand movement perfectly so that she couldn't spot any fault. However doing what he should have done in charms, he kept his magic locked up tight and only let a trickle of magic go into the spell.

The result in this caused the mouse to have only transfigured halfway. The bottom half of the mouse turned into the water goblet, (Harry made sure it still had the fur), whilst the top half stayed as a rat. This caused the mouse to panic badly and Professor McGonagall had to step in.

"That was okay Harry. However, you do need more practice," McGonagall said. "You'll get it in the end, don't worry about it. And don't let anyone push you too hard either. If you constantly do the spell, repeatedly getting it wrong without any breaks you won't make any progress. Take ten minutes break before you try again okay?"

Harry nodded before McGonagall moved off to the next table. "Satisfied?" Harry asked Hermione who was deep in thought.

"Maybe, I mean you did the wand movements perfectly and the incantation was flawless," Hermione said. "The only way you could have sabotaged it was to not put enough magic behind the spell. There's no way you could have done that because we don't learn how to control our magic like that until NEWT's. I guess it really was just luck."

"Yeah I guess." Harry said, successfully hiding a smug grin.

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Harry by the end of the lesson managed to get to the same place as Ron, Turning it into a water goblet but still have the Mouse's fur. Harry hurried off to Ginny's Charms class to see her just coming out of the classroom. She smiled when she noticed him.

"I might get used to this Harry," Ginny said. "I might not want you to stop." She laughed as her classmates filed out of the room after her. "I even might think that you have a crush on me."

"I think it's the other way round Gin. I mean you always smile more when you see me," Harry said starting to walk with her down the hallway. As they rounded the corner they dropped the act. "You okay Gin?" Harry asked her.

"Yes. I mean no I mean..." Ginny muttered. "I'm just so confused. Why am I attacking people? Who is making me do it? How are they making me?"

"We don't know Ginny," Harry said putting an arm around her shoulders and pulling her close to him. "But it doesn't matter how. What matters is that they won't get the chance to do it again. I promise you that."

"I know." Ginny whispered. "It's the only thing I can count on at the moment. You're the only person I can count on."

"Come on. We need to get down to the great hall," Harry explained. "I've got Quidditch practice right after dinner. So I need to go have a bite to eat before I go down to the changing rooms."

They walked together down the corridors, Harry's arm wrapped around Ginny's shoulders holding her close. They weren't really

conscious of what they were doing. It just felt so natural to both them to be walking together like that. When they got to the great hall however Hermione paid it a lot of attention.

"What's happening between you two?" Hermione asked them as they sat down.

Harry and Ginny both looked up shocked. "We're best friends Hermione," Harry said, confused to what she was implying.

"Best friends don't come walking into the great hall the way you two just did," Hermione said.

"What do you mean?" Ginny asked confused.

"Harry had his arm around you," Hermione told them as if she was explaining it to three year olds.

"We're friends." Harry said.

"Do you think her brothers will hate you if they find out you're dating, is that it?" Hermione asked once again.

"We are not dating," Ginny hissed out at her. "We are and have been best friends since I was five years old. So of course we're going to be close. I'm not denying that I like Harry. I do. I like him a lot. More than he probably knows. But. We. Are. Just. Friends. That all we're going to be," she added the last line and Harry couldn't help but notice disappointment in her voice.

Hermione turned to look at Harry but he didn't say anything. He didn't agree with the last sentence but couldn't say that.

"Harry!" Wood's voice interrupted them. "Quidditch practice."

"Wait, I don't get dinner first?" Harry moaned out dropping his fork that had mash potato on it.

"You can have dinner afterwards," Wood said. "Go get changed and meet me down at the Quidditch pitch."

Harry groaned as he put down his fork and stood up. "Alright, alright. Let me go get my Quidditch gear and broom," Harry said getting up

and walking out of the hall. Harry saw Wood leave through the oak front doors and Harry strolled towards the staircase that lead to the seventh floor corridor where the portrait of the Fat Lady hanged to cover the entrance to the common room.

When he was changed and back down into the Entrance hall Ginny came out to meet him. "Do you mind if I watch?" Ginny asked.

Harry looked at her and then turned his attention to the windows that showed that it had started to snow. "In this weather?" Harry asked her strangely. "It's freezing. I wouldn't want to go out there if Wood wasn't making me. Why do you want to?"

"I don't particularly want to stay alone right now," Ginny whispered. "With what is going on."

"But you won't be," Harry said taking Ginny's hand. "You've got Ron, Hermione and Neville."

"But no one who knows what's going on," Ginny said. "Please."

"Okay you can come and watch," Harry said causing her to look grateful at him. "Go get your cloak." Harry waited fifteen minutes for Ginny to come back and he knew that he would be in trouble with Wood. Harry also noticed she had the diary with her. He had to restrain himself from taking it right out of her hands there and then. He also refrained from telling her that he thought that it was responsible for what was happening. He couldn't tell her that he knew it was because that would bring up questions which shouldn't be answered at this time. If he showed distrust towards the diary and then it suddenly disappeared Ginny would know he took it.

When Harry and Ginny got down to the Quidditch pitch Harry stopped just outside the doors to the changing room. He took out his wand and pointed it towards Ginny. "Tepidus sursum" he saw her body relax as the Ginny felt the effects of the warming charm.

"I'm going to go watch from the stands," Ginny muttered. "Have fun," she playfully added.

"Sure," Harry said dryly and walked into the dressing room.



"I said come straight down Harry!" Wood berated him as soon as he walked through the door.

"I'm here now Wood," Harry replied.

"Right so we can get this practice started," Wood addressed them. "What happened last game is not our fault. You know that and I know that. However, because of the massive loss and the better brooms Slytherin have, we need to play our absolute best in both games to come. We have Hufflepuff next which we should be able to win and then Ravenclaw which last year we won with a shut-out."

"But Ravenclaw has improved a lot with two new chasers and there is a new seeker called Cho Chang," Wood explained. "The chances of Hufflepuff winning against Slytherin are laughable. Not meaning to be cruel but that's the truth. Slytherin will pummel them. We lost to Slytherin by two hundred and ninety points. We need to make this back up and then some more in the last two matches. It's possible; we won by four hundred points in the final at the end of June last year. We need to play that well again. We play like that against Hufflepuff and Ravenclaw then there is no chance Slytherin have to win that cup."

"But it is obvious from the Slytherin game that we have lost some edge over the summer," Wood concluded. "This is why we need to train our very best and get back to that form we had before. Do you guys think you can do that?"

"Yes," The six of them said.

"Good. We can play better than this. This is why I created the new training regime, so we don't fall behind. Therefore, we keep up the high standard we set ourselves last year. It's going to be tough. Especially as Slytherin have better brooms. But only Slytherin do. Ravenclaw and Hufflepuff don't. So let's get out on that pitch and try to get back to the form we had last year."

After that speech every one of the Gryffindor team had the urgency about them to push themselves to the limit. Once they were up in the air the Angelina, Katie and Alicia grabbed the quaffle and started passing it to each other, getting faster as the practice went on. They dropped it a couple of times but soon they could pass the quaffle at such speed that it was only a blur.

After fifteen minutes of scoring sixteen goals continuously against Wood, the captain called a halt to the practice. "Fred, George where are the Bludgers?" he demanded. "Girls that's great, superbly great. We've been out here two hours and you're getting your form back. However, what we need is more practices to get back to where you were. But we will get there."

"Harry you've caught the snitch twice in that time and that's great but you need to pick up the speed. I want you to be able to spot the snitch, and keep it in your sights without the opposition's seeker seeing it as well. I want you be-able to go catch the snitch on our terms. When we can and when it best suits us. We can win this championship but its going to be hard. However, I have faith in you all. Now let's get inside. It's getting too dark to do anything."

Half an hour latter Harry walked out of the changing rooms to see that the snow had settled on the ground now and was starting to get thick. Ginny was leaning against the changing room's wall waiting for Harry to come out.

"You know you didn't have to wait for me," Harry said to her. Ginny's head looked up to see Harry's.

"But what if something happened?" Ginny whispered.

"It won't I promised you that," Harry said, putting his arm around Ginny and they started to walk back up to the castle together.

"It's nice in the snow isn't it?" Ginny muttered looking up at the castle that was Hogwarts. "It's beautiful really," she added before shivering lightly.

"The warming charm stopped working?" Harry asked her pulling her closer to him.

"A little I think," Ginny whispered. "But I'm fine at the moment. You're keeping me nice and warm."

"So that's what I am to you? Just something to keep you warm?" Harry laughed out.

"No," Ginny whispered. "You're the most important person in my life."

"You're important to me too," Harry whispered back. "And Madam Pomfrey would kill me if I catch a cold out in this" he added as the snow started to get heavier. So Harry and Ginny started to make the way back to the castle a little quicker than they were.

When they got to the castle Harry and Ginny made their way straight to the hospital wing where Madam Pomfrey started to make a fuss over him.

"Making you do Quidditch practise in this weather is ridiculous," Madam Pomfrey muttered when she took Harry's temperature. "After just getting a head injury too." She fussed over him for just over ten minutes with Ginny enjoying the disgusted look on Harry's face.

"What's wrong with wanting you to be healthy?" Ginny asked when the matron had gone into her office and given Harry a break from her fussing. Harry glared at her.

"Wanting me to be healthy is one thing. Obsessing over my health is another," Harry remarked.

"She's not obsessing and neither am I," Ginny said. "I'm looking out for you just as much as you're looking out for me. It's not nearly the same but I need to do something to pay you back."

Harry glanced at Madam Pomfrey's to see if there was any chance of her over hearing before he turned his attention back to Ginny. "Listen to me Ginny and listen closely because I'm only ever going to say this once. Under no circumstances do you have to pay me back for anything. I don't want to hear another word about that. Please."

Ginny looked helplessly at Harry. "But I've got to..." she started but Harry interrupted her.

"But nothing, you just concentrate on getting healthier and past what's happened. Nothing else," Harry told her. "Just concentrate on getting better."

"I don't know how I got you as my best friend," Ginny said, tears in her eyes now. "But I wouldn't trade you for anything." Harry got off the bed and went over to where Ginny was sitting and enveloped her in another hug,

"Don't cry Gin," He whispered. "I hate it when I see you cry. Plus Madam Pomfrey will be back any second." Ginny nodded and Harry broke the hug and sat back down on his bed. He brought out his wand and cast the glamour charm just before Madam Pomfrey came back over to his bed.

"Well," Madam Pomfrey started. "I see absolute nothing wrong. For someone who just two days ago got crashed over the head with a bludger like you did I wouldn't even expect them to be up."

"However you are and if I didn't know what happened two days ago I wouldn't even be able to guess," Madam Pomfrey said. "Ms Weasley, do you promise to keep a close eye on him? To not let him out of your sight?" she asked Ginny.

Ginny gave Harry a confused look before answering her. "Of course."

"If Mr Weasley and Mr Longbottom keep an eye out for you during the night, I am inclined to let you stay in the dormitories from now on," Madam Pomfrey explained causing a huge smile to form on Harry's face. "However if you get even a hint of a headache you are to come straight here, is that understood?"

Harry nodded, not daring to believe that Madam Pomfrey was going to let him stay in the Gryffindor tower that night. "Good. Now get out of here so I can get some peace and quiet. Goodness knows I could do with some. Whenever the fifth years do switching spells there's always someone coming in here with wrong body parts in the wrong place, or a plant for a body part needing mending. I had four people in here today. What are you two still doing here; I thought you would have left as soon as I said you could go. Now go."

Harry jumped off the bed smiling ear to ear. "You don't need to tell me twice," Harry said, waiting for Ginny to get up of the chair. "Well actually you did but see yah." With that, both Harry and Ginny walked out of the hospital wing.

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Latter that night Harry, Ginny, Hermione, Ron and Neville sat in their usual seats by the fire. Hermione had books and parchments around her, trying desperately to finish her transfiguration essay before they went of to bed. The time was now close to ten and Harry was getting tired.

"There!" Hermione said. "I'm done. You finished your essay Ron?"

Ron, who was hunched over his essay for Lockhart, groaned before answering. "I've got a little more to do. It's not due till tomorrow afternoon. I'll do it during lunch."

"If you haven't got much to do, do it now," Hermione said rolling up her scroll of parchment.

"But I'm tired and it's late," Ron moaned out. "Surely I can do it tomorrow lunch time."

"Fine but if you get detention for not handing in your work, don't blame me," Hermione huffed. "Coming to bed Ginny?" Hermione asked her.

Ginny was sitting near the fire, the diary in her lap. She had her eyes closed and was relaxing. The perks of not having to worry about doing her homework. Once again, they had used the automated essay writer. "Sure hang on," Ginny said before closing the diary and putting it on the arm of the couch.

"What's that?" Hermione asked looking at the black book. Ginny had never actually had the diary out in front of anyone before.

"Oh just something I write notes in from class," Ginny lied. "Let me pack up." Ginny then hurriedly grabbed her bag and put her books and parchment in. Harry eyed the diary and wondered if making it invisible to Ginny would be a good idea. However before he turned down that proposal Ginny was sleepily saying goodnight and going up the stairs to her dorm.

'She must be extremely tired to forget the diary,' Harry thought as he watched Ron and Neville go up to the boy's dormitory. Harry quickly

walked over to the diary and picked it up. Was it this simple? He didn't even have to try...

"Oh thanks Harry," came the voice of Ginny behind him. Harry turned around to see Ginny coming down the stairs. "I was worried someone would find that," Ginny said, her hand out stretched for Harry to give her the diary back. How Harry would have loved to refuse to give it back to her. To say she couldn't have it, to say that it was the diary which was making her attack people. Yet Ginny wouldn't believe him.

Ginny was the person to stick by her friends and defend them. To her the diary was her friend. Harry doubted that she would listen even to him. It would cause them to argue and he knew how Ginny could get in a temper. One time when Ginny was eight and Harry was nine, he had accidentally stepped on one of her flowers she had potted in the garden. She had refused to talk to for the rest of the week. It was an accident but she had still been mad at him about it. How mad would she be if Harry started excusing Tom of controlling her and making her attack people? It was true but Ginny didn't know that and she would stick by Tom and defend him. Knowing that Ginny needed him more now then ever meant that he couldn't afford them to be at rifts at the moment. So very reluctantly he smiled as he handed her the diary.

"Thanks," Ginny said as she turned and went back up to her dorm. Harry mentally kicked himself. He needed to get the diary away and the sooner the better. Harry stayed down in the common for half an hour thinking of a way to get the diary away from her when it struck him.

Ginny was probably now peacefully asleep without any idea what was happening in the real world. He was the heir of Gryffindor and he had Estelle. He could sneak into the girl's dormitory and take it away from her. She would never guess it was him because she, like everyone else, knew that no boys could walk up the girls' stairway.

However, he didn't need to do that. Not when he had Estelle. Silently in his mind he called out to her and with a burst of flames Estelle was sitting on the arm rest of the couch.

"Was there a reason you called for me this late of night Harry," Estelle asked. "I was dropping off to sleep."

Harry was just about to answer when he heard a noise from the girl's staircase and Estelle hurriedly flamed away. Angry that someone had once again stopped him getting the diary away from Ginny he was surprised when Ginny herself came into view. She was now wearing her nightdress and she had her dressing gown on.

"Ginny?" he asked shocked to see her. He would have thought that she would have been asleep by now.

"What you doing down here?" Ginny asked. "I thought you went to bed."

"I thought you did too," Harry said gently.

"I..." Ginny started then stopped. Then after a pause, she started again. "I was going to your dormitory. I can't sleep. Not when I'm not near you. It always happens when I fall asleep," Ginny muttered and Harry walked over to her and pulled her into a hug.

"I told you it won't happen again," Harry said rubbing her back smoothly. "It won't happen. I promise." Harry hated this; she was so different to her normal and lively self. It scared him knowing it was his fault she was like this. Nevertheless, he was going to rectify it. Soon. "You can't come up to the dorm just in case someone sees you," Harry told her leading her to the couch. "But why don't you sleep down here. There are two couches here. You can have the one by the fire and I'll sleep in the one over there." Harry said pointing to the couch near the window.

"You'd do that for me?" Ginny asked.

"I'd do anything," Harry replied. He watched Ginny settle down on the couch. With a wave of his wand, he conjured a pillow and a duvet and Ginny settled down on the couch to go to sleep.

"Aren't you going to sleep too Harry?" she asked sleepily.

"I am," Harry said going over to the other couch. "I was just making sure you got off to sleep."

"Thank you," Ginny whispered so quietly that Harry could hardly hear her. He was about to reply when he realised that Ginny had in fact fallen asleep. Smiling he tucked the edges of the duvet around her to keep her warm and once again called Estelle who this time flamed in quietly.

"Is she alright?" Estelle asked him in his mind.

"No," Harry replied truthfully in his mind in order not to wake Ginny. "But she will be. I need you to take me to Ginny's dorm. We need that diary."

"Grab hold then," Estelle said handing out her tail feathers and Harry grabbed hold of them. In a flash of fire, the common room vanished and he found himself in Ginny's dormitory. It was the same as the second year boy's dormitory down to the same hangings on the bed. Harry crept about the room searching for the bed Ginny slept in. It wasn't that hard to find, as it was the only one empty. Crouching down and making sure he didn't make a sound, he opened her trunk to see clothes and books all over the place. Smiling slightly at her untidiness he searched through until at the very bottom he saw where the diary was hidden. His hand has just grabbed hold of it when he heard a cough behind him. Harry let go of the diary hastily and turned in horror. He saw nothing. Two beds away someone rolled over and coughed in their sleep again.

Sighing he grabbed hold of the diary and placed it on Ginny's bed. He then put everything back how he found it and the closed the trunk. Once Estelle had taking him back to the common room Harry walked over to the fire and Estelle flew over to Ginny. He took one long look at the diary that had caused Ginny so much trouble this term and then without a backward glance he threw it into the flames of the fire.

Just as the diary touched the flames, there was a massive bang and a flash of light and the diary flew away from the fire unharmed. The bang woke Ginny up and she groaned out calling Harry's name.

"I'm here, don't worry," Harry hastily said hurrying towards her and hoping she wouldn't sit up and see the diary on the other side of the room.

"What was that?" Ginny said in a scarred voice.



"I just banged into the table," Harry lied through his teeth. "Nothing to worry about, nothings happening go back to sleep."

"I thought you were going to sleep," Ginny muttered. Trying to sit up but Harry pushed her gently back down onto the couch.

"I am," Harry said. "Don't worry. I am now. Go back to sleep."

"But what was that bang?" Ginny asked, worry etched into her voice.

"Nothing to worry over Ginny," Harry said. "Don't you trust me?"

"With all my heart," Ginny whispered.

"Then go back to sleep," Harry said and Ginny slowly lay back down. Within five minutes, Harry could yet again hear the steady breathing of Ginny being asleep. He went to the other side of the common room to where the diary was lying on the floor and picked it up.

He should have known that Voldemort would have put some extra defences on the diary. Thinking back now to when Harry first found the diary in the sodden bathroom of Moaning Myrtle the pages should have ripped apart easily from being soaked through but it stayed intact. He should have realised that it wouldn't be this simple. However, if Voldemort protected it how was he going to destroy it? He destroyed it last time with a basilisk fang and even though there was one a couple of hundred feet below the school, he wasn't going to open the Chamber Of Secrets just to destroy it. Who knew, there might be some spell stopping a basilisk fang. Harry had destroyed the diary when Tom was out of it. However, Tom was still in the diary this time. Maybe even a basilisk fang wouldn't do it this time. He needed to speak to Dumbledore but now wasn't the time. It was too late and Harry needed sleep.

Harry took one quick look at Ginny to make sure she wouldn't miss him and hurried up to his dormitory. Once there he found his trunk and opened it up. He placed the diary right at the bottom of his trunk and closed it again. Making sure no one would look in his trunk and find it Harry tapped his wand on top of it silently casting his most powerful locking charm.

The diary was safe and away from Ginny at last. Now he could solely concentrate on getting Ginny better. Glad that he finally managed to get the diary away from Ginny he headed back down stairs and to the couch next to window. He conjured a pillow and a blanket for himself and settled down on the couch. Taking one quick look at Ginny to make sure she was sleeping peacefully, he closed his eyes and drifted off to the realms of dreams. He was glad that tomorrow he could solely concentrate on getting Ginny better and not have to worry about the blasted diary.

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Harry's magic woke him up early the next morning as he intended so no one would come down to find both him and Ginny sleeping in the common room. He didn't need questions being asked about that. Harry felt happy for first time in days. He had the diary away from Ginny, there was a blizzard going on outside to make the whole grounds covered in snow and he had slept the best he had ever since he left the cursed diary in Ginny's cauldron over the summer.

He wasn't sure how long he sat there watching Ginny sleep peacefully. However, when she started to stir Harry went over to her.

"Hey sleepy," Harry said gently. "You need to get up and back to your dorm before anyone notices that you're missing."

"What time is it?" Ginny mumbled out.

"Six." Harry answered. "But you can't risk anyone figuring out you were down here all night. They'll ask questions."

"Okay." Ginny said and Harry helped her up of the sofa.

"Stay up there for an hour or two before you come back down." Harry told her. "That way people won't think about it. They'll just think that you woke up a couple of minutes before them."

"Sure. Okay," Ginny said walking slowly towards her dorm. "Harry," she said just before she disappeared up the steps.

"Yeah Gin?" Harry replied.

"Thank you for staying with me last night," Ginny said. "Nothing happened did it? I don't remember anything."

"No, nothing happened," Harry said glad that Ginny was too sleepy to remember the loud bang that came from the diary. With that, Ginny walked the rest of the way up to her dorm.

Deciding now that he was up he might as well do something he went for a walk around the castle. He met no one this early and he soon found himself next to the tapestry depicting Barnabas the Barmy's foolish attempt to train trolls for ballet. That meant, Harry realised, that the door to the room of requirement was on the opposite wall.

An idea for a way to calm Ginny down a bit crossed his mind. He never asked the room for this before and he wasn't sure if it was possible. But he started to walk past where he knew the door should be backwards and forwards thinking over and over his need of the room and what it should become.

After his third time the door to the Room Of Requirement appeared and Harry opened up the door to see if it had worked. Harry stepped through the door and was stunned at what he saw. 'Yes,' he thought 'this had definitely worked.'

Half an hour later Harry was climbing through the portrait hole of the Gryffindor tower smiling to himself. His plan fully formed in his mind. He wouldn't be able to carry it out until after classes but he was sure Ginny would love it.

"Where did you go?" Ginny's voice reached him and Harry turned to see Ginny sitting on the couch, tears falling down her face.

"Ginny," Harry said rushing towards her. "What's wrong?"

"Where did you go?" Ginny repeated.

"I just went out for a walk around the castle. I'm here now," Harry said putting an arm around her.

"He's gone," Ginny whispered.

"Who's gone Ginny?" Harry asked

"He's gone," Ginny repeated. "Tom. I went to speak to him this morning but I couldn't find the diary anywhere. He's gone."

"It will turn up," Harry said trying to comfort Ginny. "Someone will find it."

"That's what I'm afraid of," Ginny whispered. "I told Tom about me attacking people. What if he tells someone that it's me?"

"You told Tom?" Harry asked. "When?"

Ginny stayed deathly quiet and Harry started to worry. "When did you tell Tom Ginny?" Harry asked her again

"When it started, when Hagrid's first Rooster was killed. I woke up with blood and feathers in my bed. I was so confused," Ginny said looking away from Harry.

"You told Tom all along but you never thought to come and tell me?" Harry asked her.

Ginny's head snapped up when she heard the hurt in his voice. "Of course I thought of telling you. I wanted to tell you straight away. I just didn't want to lose you as my friend. I didn't know how you would react. I know now but I didn't then."

"Sorry," Harry said, running his hand through Ginny's hair. "I should have realised. You've got nothing to worry about. I'm staying right by your side through this. You'll never lose me. And you can tell me anything. Anything you would have told Tom you can tell me. I mean I'm your best friend. What could there possibly be that I won't like huh?"

"Well..." Ginny started but she was cut off with the sound of feet coming from the girls' dormitory.

"Tell me latter?" Harry said to her and Ginny nodded.

-oOoOoOo-

Harry sat once again in the potions dungeon, staring at the clock waiting for time to slip by and for Harry to be able to put his plan into action. He had expanded on the thought that he had that morning

near the room of requirement and now all he had to do was to get Ginny and head towards the room of requirement before anyone noticed where they were going.

The snow that had started yesterday and had then later turned into a blizzard in the night still blew forcefully out side in the grounds. So much so, that it was threatening to cancel Herbology classes. Wood, after being cornered by the whole team had reluctantly agreed to suspend all Quidditch practices until at least after the Christmas holidays and the snow had started to melt.

Harry was flung out of his thoughts as the bell rung and he left the class without even listening to what Snape was saying. He wanted to get to Ginny and then head off to the room of requirement. Ginny, like every Tuesday afternoon, had transfiguration, so when Harry made it all the way up the dungeon steps, rather than turning with Ron, Hermione and Neville into the great hall, he walked up the steps toward the Gryffindors head classroom leaving the others to go off to tea without him.

He knew that they would worry when Ginny and he didn't turn up but he put them out of his mind. This was for Ginny. He was the reason she was in this state. He was going to help get her out of it. Once he reached the classroom, Harry saw McGonagall coming out of the room and lock the door.

"Professor. Where's Ginny?" Harry asked her worried.

"You just missed her not two minutes ago," McGonagall said. "She said she was going to the common room."

Thanking Professor McGonagall, he walked quickly down the hallway and turned the corner where he called for Estelle to take him to hers and Simon's hidden room. From there it was only a quick walk to the common room.

Harry had just entered the common room when Ginny came down from the girls dormitories. Ginny smiled her most beautiful smile in Harry's opinion when she saw him.

"Hey Harry," Ginny greeted him normally for the sake of the straggling students who were still in the common room rather than having gone down to dinner.

"You're not hungry Gin?" Harry asked her as she reached him.

"Starved," Ginny laughed. "I just didn't want to carry all my books down to the hall when I was close to the tower. Save me lugging it all the way down seven flights of stairs.

"Well I got a surprise for you so follow me," Harry said mysteriously and led her out of the common room. Once they were out of sight from the Fat Lady, Ginny turned to Harry worried.

"I still can't find Tom, Harry," Ginny said sadness in her voice. "He was my friend."

"He'll turn up I'm sure," Harry said putting his arm around her.

"Hopefully," Ginny replied. "But what if someone took it?"

"Then we just have to keep an eye out for someone carrying it around," Harry answered. "It could be anyone."

"No it's someone in Gryffindor," Ginny said. "A girl too. As it was in my trunk and no one but a girl can come in."

"Well then we will keep an eye out for it in the common room. But remember even if Tom is gone, you still have me," Harry said.

"Jealous?" Ginny said with a smirk.

"I'll say yes just because I managed to get you to smile without putting on a front," Harry jokingly replied.

"You could always make me smile Harry," Ginny told him and Harry took her hand in his leading her along two corridors and a flight of steps until they came to the tapestry of Barnabas the Barmy and stopped facing a blank wall.

"Gee I really wanted to see this," Ginny drawled out. "I'm hungry! Why can't we go down to tea?"

"Well you're cracking jokes," Harry said letting go of her hand that he now realised he held all the way here. "You must be feeling a little better."

"You bring it out of me," Ginny replied. "I just can help but feel safe around you."

"Well we would have a problem if you didn't," Harry said starting to walk backwards and forwards, thinking of what he needed.

"Err... is there any point of your passing?" Ginny asked. However, the answer appeared to her in a form of a door now situated where there was once a solid wall. "What the...?" Ginny said shocked.

Harry opened the door and bowed. "After you. And maybe next time you won't question my actions." Ginny walked through the door to find herself standing on the edge of a Quidditch pitch.

"You always said over the summer that you're always the calmest and having the most fun when you're flying," Harry said to her. Harry closed his eyes and to Ginny's shock two broomsticks appeared out of thin air next to him. Harry handed her one and she noticed that it had Firebolt written across it.

"What's a Firebolt?" Ginny asked. She had never heard of a broomstick called that before.

"It's a prototype," Harry replied. "They're currently in production and should be released in the summer." Apparently they're the fastest brooms in the world."

Ginny starred opened mouthed at him. "How on earth did you get them?" this time Harry smiled, glad that he could now explain the room to her.

"This Ginny is called the Room of Requirement," Harry started. "Basically it's a room that becomes anything you need it to become. And it only exists when you need it. To conjure up the room you pace backwards and forwards pass the tapestry of Barnabas the Barmy, clearly thinking what you want the room to become and what you need. Then after the third time of passing the tapestry the door appears in the wall.

"What can the room become?" Ginny asked curiously.

"Anything you need. It can become anything you need and conjure anything you need," Harry explained.

"Anything?" Ginny said awed. "Do you think it will conjure the diary?"

Harry stomach dropped making him feel sick. It couldn't could it? Harry had locked it in his trunk with the strongest charms he knew. The room couldn't conjure the diary could it? "Give it a try." Harry said praying to God that it didn't work.

Ginny closed her eyes concentrating hard. However the diary didn't appear. Glad, Harry got ready to console Ginny.

"I guess not," Ginny whispered.

"You'll find it," Harry said. "But we can't do anything about it now. Now let's just concentrate on having fun. And be careful, the broom is very fast."

"It can't be much faster than the Nimbus can it," Ginny said, hopping onto her broom.

"Ginny don't," Harry said hurriedly. "Maybe you should come onto the back of mine first."

"You don't think I can handle it?" Ginny asked.

"Honestly and don't take it the wrong way cause I know you can fly brilliantly, but no I don't think you would be-able to. This broom is outstandingly fast. I don't want you to be shocked and fall off. Just come onto the back of mine first. Just so you know how fast it is," Harry explained. "Please," he added.

"I trust you Harry," Ginny said nodding putting the broom back. Harry slid backwards nodding in front of him, telling Ginny to get on.

"You want me in front of you?" Ginny asked strangely eyeing the space of the broomstick.

"To make sure you don't full off the back," Harry explained. "Trust me. I won't bite."



Ginny, breathing slowly eyed the space Harry was indicating before walking towards Harry and the broom and getting on. The problem was Ginny sat too high up on the broom. Harry need to be able to put his arms around Ginny. Sighing he kicked gently off the ground and went up in the air so they were a couple of feet above the ground.

Once they were ten feet up in the air Harry, keeping it steady with his knees, let go of the broom with his hands. He put them on Ginny's waist and pulled her back into him. She gasped, surprised at suddenly being pulled back snugly in between Harry's legs.

"I can't fly this thing if you're sitting way up there," Harry explained. "I can't reach around you. Now lean forward." Ginny leaned forward a little and Harry shook his head. "More Ginny," Harry said to her, pushing her down gently so that she was lying flat across the broom. "That's better," Harry said crouching down close to her head. "Now hold on...Tight!" and with that Harry pointed the broom upwards and accelerated the broom at full speed.

He felt Ginny slid backwards a little even closer to him so now that there was no space between them what so ever. Higher and higher they went and Harry wondered if they was going to reach the ceiling soon. He didn't know how the room of requirement worked. Would you be able to keep going up and up and not reach the ceiling because you required the room to be that high?

Deciding that he had flown high enough, he flattened out and slowed the broom down to talk to Ginny. "Having fun?" he asked her.

"Next time you do that bloody well warn me," Ginny gasped out.

"Having fun?" Harry repeated and he felt Ginny's body shake with laughter as well of hearing it come out of her mouth. He missed hearing that laugh. He hadn't heard it for a couple of days. Not a forced one anyway. Then again the ones a couple of days ago were probably forced ones too."

"I guess you were right about the broom going fast." Ginny said, "How high up do you think we are. Surely we would have met the ceiling by now."

"Remember this is the Room of Requirement. It will be as high as we need it. And guessing I would say we're about a mile high," Harry said casually. However Ginny did not take that information as calmly as Harry thought she would.

"How high?" Ginny said frozen.

"You're not scared are you Ginny?" Harry whispered in her ear. Then without warning her, he pointed the broom downwards and accelerated fast. With Ginny's screams echoing in his ears they flew closer and closer to the ground. Just before they hit the ground Harry levelled out and shot off full speed to the end of the made up Quidditch pitch.

Once he got to the goals he went into a tight turn through one hundred and eighty degrees. Once he straightened out he put another burst of speed on and shot off to the opposite goal posts. When he got there, he slowed the broom down and eventually stopped, hovering a couple of feet above the ground.

"You think you could handle having a go controlling the broom now Ginny?" Harry said. Ginny didn't answer but Harry decided that he was going to get off anyhow and he reluctantly slid away from Ginny and hopped off the broom.

Once Harry had touched on the floor, Ginny slid backwards a bit so she could sit comfortable. "Were you seriously trying to kill me?" she whispered out and Harry chuckled.

"No faith?" Harry replied.

"I have faith," Ginny said. "How could I not. I just don't want to be killed on a broomstick."

"I had complete control," Harry countered.

"So?" Ginny said as that all that mattered. "Next time warn me!"

"So you want there to be a next time?" Harry said smirking. "That means you enjoyed it."

"I didn't say I didn't enjoy it," Ginny huffed. "I said just warn me next time. Now do we have a quaffle or a snitch we can play with?"

"What did you get for your birthday Ginny? What did you get ME for my birthday?" Harry said to her.

"But they're at home," Ginny reminded him.

"Then what is this?" Harry said taking a golden snitch out of his pocket, causing Ginny to smile even more. "So want to play?"

For the next three hours, Harry and Ginny ignored the world outside the Room of Requirement. They constantly flew around playing with Harry's snitch, trying to catch it. Harry got it most of the time but Ginny got it a couple of times as well. For the last hour they swapped to Ginny's quaffle which Estelle fetched for them and Harry took up the post of goalkeeper whilst Ginny practiced her shooting against him.

After an hour they were both hot and sweaty and in need of a shower. Thinking they needed this, the Quidditch pitch and the brooms disappeared and two doors appeared in front of them leading into a bathroom with showers. Once they had cleaned themselves up, Harry and Ginny left the room of requirement. Once they closed the door, it disappeared and turned back into a solid brick wall.

"Did you enjoy that?" Harry said once the door had disappeared. Ginny had leant against the wall waiting for Harry.

"The most fun I had since I came to Hogwarts," Ginny said. "I almost forgot about everything that was going on when we were flying."

"That Gin, was the point," Harry told her gently.

"I don't deserve you," Ginny said.

"No Gin. It's I, who don't deserve you. But can we argue this later, I'm getting hungry," Harry said starting to walk along the corridor.

"What is it with boys and them always thinking with their stomach?" Ginny said, falling in step.

"What is it with girls and them always complaining about something?" Harry sarcastically replied. That earned a smack around the head from Ginny.

"Prat!" she simply said.

"Yeah but you still like me!" Harry said.

Ginny was stalled for only a second before answering. "Yeah I do. Unfortunately," she added before running off with Harry chasing her.

Once they got to the entrance hall Harry dragged Ginny off towards a door that the Hufflepuffs always went through to go to their common room.

"Where are we going?" Ginny asked

"You want some food don't you?" Harry replied simply.

"But the Great Hall..." Ginny said confused pointing behind them.

"Ginny, we were in the Room of Requirement for three hours," Harry told her. "Tea finished ages okay."

"So what are we going to do? I'm starving," Ginny said. "Wouldn't the room of requirement have given us food?" she added thoughtfully.

"I suppose it would have," Harry replied, ponderously. "I didn't think of that."

"Just another reason why boys are dumb," Ginny joked.

"You really are in a good mood aren't you?" Harry said.

"Because of you," she said gently.

"Well I'm glad I can make you happy," Harry said finally stopping outside a portrait of a bowl of fruit. Tickling the pear it turned into a handle, which Harry grabbed and pulled the portrait open to reveal the kitchens.

"Tea is served Madam," Harry said bowing and letting Ginny through the door first, causing her to laugh. Once they were both through the door, they were swamped with house elves.

"Is there anything we can get you Sir and Miss?" one house elf squeaked out.

"Yes. We missed dinner and we're slightly hungry," Harry explained.

"No problem sir and miss," another house elf said. "We is getting you some food." The house elves started to move frantically around the kitchen and not a couple of seconds later they brought three trays full to the brim of food, causing Ginny to look shocked.

"Anything wrong with the food miss?" The house elf who addressed them first said, misreading Ginny's expression. "We is terribly sorry. We will punish ourselves for this miss."

This sentence brought Ginny back to reality. "No, no. It's fine. It's just I didn't realise you would give us so much. Not that it's a bad thing," she quickly added when she noticed that the house elves looked worried.

Once Harry and Ginny sat down and started to eat the elves left them to it.

"And here I admired Fred and George for sneaking into the kitchens to get food. It's not exactly difficult is it? Anyone could do it if they knew where the kitchens are. I mean the house elves just give the food away," Ginny said

"Yeah that's true," Harry said. "Listen I don't think you should tell anyone we were down here. Especially not Hermione."

"Why not?" Ginny asked.

"Just trust me," Harry said. "She wouldn't like the idea of house elves like this."

"Okay," Ginny promised.

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Once they had eaten dinner they headed up to the common room where they were cornered by Hermione.

"Where have you two been?" Hermione asked as soon as they sat down.

"We weren't hungry," Harry said and Ginny smiled, going along with the story. "So we walked around the castle a bit exploring."

"It was really good," Ginny said acting like this story wasn't new to her.

"Well you could have told us," Ron said. "We might have wanted to come with you."

"What? You miss dinner?" Neville said. "I would love to see that."

Ron was just about to answer back when a fifth year came by with some talismans around his neck.

"Does anyone want to buy some talismans of me? They're one hundred percent guaranteed to protect you. Only five galleons each," the fifth year boy said.

"Do they actually work?" Hermione asked scrutinizing them. "I heard a couple of third years complain about getting ripped off."

"Of course they..." The boy started but what they did they didn't find out as both Fred and George came hurrying over.

"Not these people Matt," George said. "There are some Third years over there though."

"Yeah try sell some to them," Fred said and the fifth year boy walked away.

"I should have known you were behind it," Harry said. "Couldn't you have at least cut your fellow pranksters into the deal?"

"We were going to," Fred said.

"Yeah but we weren't sure how well it would pick up," George continued.

"But we always planned on given you and Ginny fifty percent of the profits," Fred finished.

"That's despicable," Hermione raged at them. "Do they work?"

"There are protection charms on them. However we haven't tested them against whom, or whatever is attacking the students," George said.

"Yeah we didn't particularly want to get petrified," Fred said.

"But rest assured they aren't fake," Fred continued. "We wouldn't do anything to put people in danger."

"Well," Hermione said looking at the twins disapprovingly. "I suppose that's something."

-oOoOoOo-

Later that night, once everyone had drifted up to there dorms, Harry snuck back down stairs again to meet Ginny. She was lying on the couch, terribly sleepy after being warn out playing quidditch.

"Hey sleepy," Harry said greeting her. "How you feeling?" he asked walking over to here and kneeling down beside the couch.

"Better, now you're here," Ginny replied.

"Good, now go to sleep," Harry said gently pushing a stray strand of hair that had fallen across Ginny's face.

"Can we play quidditch again tomorrow?" Ginny asked closing her eyes.

"Not sure," Harry said. "Depends if we can get away from the others without them questioning it. We'll see."

"Night Harry," Ginny said pulling the duvet closer around her.

Within the minute, she had drifted off to sleep. Once he had made sure she wasn't going to wake up he called Estelle so that she would watch over Ginny and get him if she woke up.

Once Estelle had settle down next to Ginny and Harry thought that she would be okay, he walked out of the common room and headed off towards the headmasters office. Harry had had to wait for five minutes for Filch to move away from the last set of staircase nearest Dumbledore's office but apart from that slight inconvenience, he met no one on the way there.

Harry, once again, like last time, asked for the statue to move aside and let him have access to the Headmaster's Office. Climbing up the steps, he wondered what Dumbledore would say. Harry knew that Dumbledore would never stoop so low to say that he told him so, but Dumbledore was against this from the start.

As he came to the door with the griffin knocker on, he practiced breathing slowly. Deciding that he should get this over with now rather than later he knocked on the door. There was no answer. Maybe Dumbledore had already gone to sleep. Harry knocked on the door once again yet there was no answer. He needed to speak to the headmaster tonight because during the days he wouldn't have anytime because he was looking after Ginny.

Harry waited for another twenty minutes before deciding to give up. Sighing, Harry turned around and walked back down the steps. Half way down though Harry swayed to a stop as the stairs started to rotate upwards. Hoping that this was Dumbledore Harry stayed on the staircase and once again let it take him upwards towards the headmaster's office. As he reached the top, he stepped off and waited patiently for the stairs to stop moving. Not seconds later, the figure of Professor Dumbledore stepped off the staircase.

"Harry my dear boy," Dumbledore said at once. "What brings you here this late?"

"Ginny," Harry simply said. However, Dumbledore caught the worry in his voice.

"Of course come in," Dumbledore said, opening the door and leading Harry into his office. Harry sat down in the chair opposite Dumbledore's desk as Dumbledore himself walked around his desk and sat down in his usual chair.

"Anything the matter?" Dumbledore asked, "Is she okay?"



Harry thought for a moment of how to answer that simple question. She obviously wasn't okay. But just saying no didn't quite cover it. She was a wreck. She couldn't stay in the same room alone for longer than a minute. Ginny also had never depended on Harry as much as she was doing now.

"I'll take your silence as a no," Dumbledore said quietly.

"I've only ever seen her this bad once before," Harry said quietly. "And that was when her whole family apart from Ron was murdered in one go. She was nineteen at the time. She's only eleven now." Harry couldn't take the strain anymore. Breaking down, Harry held his head in his hands and cried. Ginny was in pain, his Ginny, and he was the cause of it. Knowing that Ginny was hurting and he could have prevented it only caused the pain to hurt more.

Dumbledore gently stood up, came around his desk and knelt down beside Harry. "I was afraid that this would happen. Watching the person you love the most get hurt is probably the worse thing that you could watch. It's the reason why Tom thinks that love makes you weak. It hurts you so much the pain is unbearable. Tom believes that pain is a weakness. And it can be. But it can also give you strength, something that Tom over looks."

"I wished that you didn't have to learn this under these circumstances," Dumbledore said to Harry. "But you wouldn't have listened to me or see reason at the start of term. But now isn't the time to look back at your past mistakes. You need to look into the future and see how to mend them. I am correct that after this you do not wish to continue with the original plan. You wish to take the diary away from Ginny?"

"I already have," Harry said, calming down a bit. "This is what I came to tell you. There will be no more attacks. I couldn't have just sat back and let Ginny go through this when I know how much she is truly suffering from it. The diary is locked in my trunk with the strongest spells I know. No-one will be able to get into my trunk and find it. And I mean no-one."

"That Harry," Dumbledore said now smiling. "Is the best news you've given me in a long time."

"There is a problem though," Harry said as Dumbledore sat back down in his chair behind the desk. "I cannot destroy the diary. I tried to throw it in the fire but it had some spell on it protecting it. I tried to figure it out but I can't find a reason why it can not be destroyed."

"How did you destroy it last time?" Dumbledore asked.

"I stuck a basilisk fang through it," Harry explained. "But I tried putting a knife through the diary. To simulate the same thing happening but the book had a force field of some kind around it. I couldn't puncture the diary with the knife."

"Was there anything different from how you destroyed it last time then to when you tried to destroy it this time?" Dumbledore asked.

"Well apart from being down in the chamber no not really," Harry said. "I mean I know the knife wasn't poisonous..." Harry stopped mid sentence hating the conclusion forming in his head.

"Tom," Harry simply said. "Tom was out of the diary last time I destroyed it. This time he's still in the diary."

"You're thinking that whilst Tom is still in the diary it cannot be destroyed?" Dumbledore asked hypothesising. "That is sadly a possibility. Tom might have protected it like that. Although, I doubt that he would have made it too hard. I mean he did have, of course, or was planning to have more Horcruxes. This was his first."

"We have to find a way," Harry said. "Letting Tom come out of the diary means letting Ginny have the diary back and I WILL NOT let that happen."

"Of course not," Dumbledore said gently to Harry. "We just need to research a way to destroy the diary with Tom still inside."

A/N: Yes, yes, yes. I know, I know. Such a hell of a long time between updates. But 51 pages and sixteen thousands words I do very much hope you lot enjoyed it.

Some of you might moan about the repetitiveness of Ginny. Rest assured this isn't me being a crap writer. I wrote it this way. I want at the moment for Ginny's character to appear confused worried and

slightly disorientated. She is in the middle of a break down, a big one. And I thought this would bring out how bad Ginny actually is.

Some of you might also be worried about the transformation after the Quidditch in the RoR. Rest assured that is NOT Ginny cured. Not by a long shot. Ginny had for the first time forgotten about everything that was going on in her life and just enjoyed the time she spent with Harry playing Quidditch. I'm sure that you all will agree what once Ginny gets back to the main school around other students who is constantly talking about the attacks that Ginny will again get nervous and worried.

Some of you may also notice the interaction changing between Harry and Ginny. This is a good sign. But I stand by what I have always said and that is they won't "officially" get together as a couple until the start of Year Three. I hope you all enjoyed this massive chapter and again I apologise for the length of the wait between chapters.

Although I have said that they won't get together until year three, please note that it doesn't just take 2 weeks to fall in love. This year Harry and Ginny's relationship will grow deeper between them. I want for when the two of them to get together to be believable and for you guys to say. "Yes I can really see that happening. I can clearly see that there in love"

I would also like to say that unfortunately even though I hated how long it was between the updates this time. I have to say that it will roughly be that long await until next chapter. I am currently in the middle of starting to plan my very own series of books which I aim for it to be published.

Therefore I have a lot of work to do. And between starting that project and my job. I will unfortunately find little time for this story. But rest assured I AM NOT abandoning this story. I never will.

I hope you guys hear from me soon. I will be active in the yahoo group though. If you guys want to talk to me and other readers of the story. The link is in my profile page. Have fun and I hope you enjoyed.

Disclaimer: I Do Not Own Harry Potter

Over the next couple of weeks Harry concentrated fully on Ginny, causing his grades to become almost non-existent. This caused Hermione to get on his back even more...which annoyed Harry to no end. At least the Polyjuice Potion was cutting up her free time that she otherwise spent trying to get Harry to try harder. It was half finished, yet they needed to get some ingredients out of Snape's personal cupboard. This part Harry wasn't going to enjoy.

Ginny got more and more worried as the potion came together. No matter how hard Harry tried, he couldn't get Ginny to forget about the potion. No matter how many times Harry told her that Malfoy couldn't possibly know anything, Ginny was still convinced that they were going to find out it was her and Hermione was going to hate her.

In the second week of December at the end of one of her Transfiguration lessons to the second years, Professor McGonagall announced that she was starting to collect names of those people that wanted to stay at the school over Christmas. Not many people signed their names down and neither did Harry. He had other plans for him and Ginny. However, Hermione threw a spanner into those plans about two days after this announcement.

Harry, Ginny, Ron and Neville were all sitting down for dinner in the Great Hall. Hermione had gone to speak to Professor Flitwick about their latest charms assignment. She had come back smiling as though she had full marks on the essay.

"Well I just saw Professor McGonagall," Hermione said, helping herself to some dinner. "I managed to put all our names down to stay for the holidays. Therefore, we don't have to worry about that. I also heard that Malfoy is staying for Christmas too, which is somewhat suspicious. I hope he isn't planning any more attacks during the holidays. That would be dreadful."

Harry grew angry with Hermione in an instant. They weren't getting on very well at the moment. Hermione's constant nagging of him to try harder was becoming a daily occurrence. "And what if we didn't want to stay?" Harry asked, failing to keep the annoyance and anger out of his voice.

"Of course you do. You want to find out it's Malfoy don't you?" Hermione asked. "The Polyjuice potion will be ready sometime during the holidays. Then we get to ask Malfoy questions and find out if it's him."

"I'm sorry Hermione but me and Ginny are going home for the holidays," Harry said, causing Ginny to look up from her bowl.

"But what about Malfoy? Don't you care that he's attacking muggleborn students?" Hermione raged at him. "Maybe I'll be attacked next. Will you care if I was?"

"Don't even go there Hermione. Of course I'll care if you get hurt," Harry replied. "But me and Ginny are going home for Christmas. We want to go home."

"And I won't be here for Christmas Day either," Neville said. "I've got something to do."

"But what if the potion is ready on Christmas day?" Hermione demanded. "What was the point of us doing the Polyjuice potion if you three don't care enough to stay for it? I went home last time but I'm staying. I think Malfoy attacking students is far more important than anything you three have."

Harry couldn't believe what Hermione just said. "Me and Ginny are going home no matter what you say Hermione," he told her. "You'll have to interrogate Malfoy without us."

"And I'm visiting my parents on Christmas Day," Neville said and Ginny and Ron suddenly understood. "If the potion is ready on any other day then I'll be here to take it with you."

"But if it's ready on Christmas day? What then? Why can't you just visit your parents at Easter?" Hermione said. "This is far more important."

Harry suddenly realised that Hermione didn't know about Neville's parents. She wasn't there at Harry's birthday when the others found out. "Hermione, Neville's parents are in the hospital, in the long term ward for the incurable."

Hermione looked shocked and turned to Neville. "I didn't know."

"It's okay Hermione," Neville said. "Harry, Ginny and Ron found out during the summer holidays at Harry's birthday party. From there on, I took the stance that everyone knew now. I forgot that you couldn't have known."

"I'm sorry Neville," Hermione said.

"Don't be," Neville said. "I don't want people to feel sorry for me. This is why I don't go spreading it about."

"Of course," Hermione said. "But this doesn't explain why you two need to go home?"

"Well... me and Ginny just want to go home for the holidays," Harry said.

"Fine. See if I care," Hermione said getting up. "I'll see you in Potions."

"It's okay," Ginny said, smiling and getting up also. "We'll stay for Christmas. Apparently it's brilliant here at Christmas time."

"Wait up," Harry said hurrying to finish his breakfast before Ginny left. "I want to talk to you about something." Harry told her after stuffing the last piece of toast in his mouth. "I'll see you two in Potions," he addressed Ron and Neville before following Ginny out of the Great Hall.

"So what is it like here at Christmas?" Ginny asked him.

"It's good," Harry told her. "But you won't find out until next year because we're going home for Christmas."

"Harry, it's okay we'll stay," Ginny said, but Harry couldn't help notice her sag a little at those words.

Harry took hold of her hand, stopped them walking and made her turn to face him. "It's me Ginny. You don't have to lie," he said. "Look me in the eye and tell me you don't want to go home."

Ginny looked up so that her beautiful chocolate brown eyes stared into the emerald eyes of Harry's. She stared at them for a minute trying but not succeeding to say what she wanted to say.

"Okay, I want to go home," Ginny said finally looking down. "But Hermione's already put our names down to stay."

"Then we'll go take our names off the list," Harry said leading her to McGonagall's office. McGonagall's office was up on the seventh floor corridor near the Gryffindor common room. It took them five minutes to get to her office and Harry hoped she had a free lesson. Luck was finally going his way for when Harry and Ginny turned the corner they saw Professor McGonagall coming out of her office.

"Ms. Weasley, Mr. Potter," Professor McGonagall said when she noticed them. "May I ask why you two are not heading to your classes?"

"We were coming to see you," Harry began, "about the Christmas holidays."

"Mr Potter," Professor McGonagall said her voice now stern. "Ms. Granger has already informed me of your plans for the holidays. So would you two please head off to your relevant classes?"

"But we do NOT wish to stay at Hogwarts. No matter what 'Ms. Granger' informed you of," Harry said. "So could you please take mine and Ginny's names off the list of students that are staying for Christmas!"

"Firstly that's five points deducted for you taking that tone with me," Professor McGonagall said before softening her voice. "And of course if you two wish to go home I will take your names off the list. If that is what you two really want? I'm sorry for not checking with you first."

"It is," Harry said.

"Ms Weasley?" McGonagall asked Ginny.

"Yes Professor. We want to go home for Christmas," Ginny said.

"Very well. And again, I apologise. I'll see you, Mr Potter, this evening," Professor McGonagall finished. McGonagall then headed off to her next class.

"So we're going home for Christmas," Ginny said. "We'd better write home to Mum and tell her otherwise she won't be there ready for us when we arrive off the train."

"Christmas at The Burrow. Going to be good isn't it?" Harry said to her as they headed to her Herbology class.

"I just want to get away from here," Ginny muttered. "Not that it's terrible here." She hastily added.

"I understand Ginny. After what's happened I completely understand." Harry said smiling down at her. "So what are we going to do at home?"

"I don't know. We'll properly get homework, which mum will make us do first thing," Ginny said.

"Decide when we get home?" Harry asked her

"Sound best to me," Ginny said.

Harry dropped her off at greenhouse one and hurriedly walked back to the castle and down into the dungeons for his afternoon lesson with Snape. Snape wasn't very happy that Harry was late and what Harry was about to do probably wouldn't help Snape's mood.

"That's ten points from Gryffindor Mr Potter," Snape sneered. "You seem to be making a habit out of being late to class. Now sit down and try to catch up with the rest of the class."

Harry walked slowly to the back where he was going to be working with Ron. "Neville thought you could do with a break from Hermione," Ron said once Harry had gotten out his potions ingredients. "Not that I'm prying but why are you late? You and Ginny left pretty early?"



Harry thought for a moment about what Ron had just said. 'Not that I'm prying...' If he wasn't prying then why was he asking? Harry thought. "If you're asking then you're obviously prying."

"You don't have to tell me," Ron added. "I was just curious."

"Me and Ginny went and took our names off the list of people staying over Christmas," Harry told him.

"Hermione's not going to like that," Ron said as he turned up the heat a little bit on there cauldron.

"I don't actually care at the moment," Harry muttered, throwing in some puffer fish eyes into his solution.

"Poor Potter," Snape said ten minutes later, eyeing his and Ron's solution. "Not your usual standards. And that is a pretty low mark to begin with." Snape sneered before heading off towards Neville, drawing what look an awful lot like a zero on his parchment. Harry caught Hermione's eye and she nodded.

Groaning, knowing that he was doing this with Snape just behind him he took out a Filibuster Firework he had borrowed from Fred and George and tapped the end with his wand. The firework sparked into life, and knowing that he had only a couple of seconds before it went off, he took aim and flung it in the air towards Malfoy's cauldron.

Harry watched as the firework landed perfectly into Malfoy's cauldron. It exploded showering the people in the front row with Swelling Solution. The room was sent into a panic. People watching horror-struck as body parts started to swell up.

"SILENCE!" roared Snape. "Anyone who has been splashed, come to the front for a Deflating Draft. When I find the person responsible for this..."

Harry tried to not to look guilty as Snape never took his gaze off him. Whilst everyone was around Snape's desk waiting to be administered the antidote, Hermione sneaked back in, the ingredients they needed hidden under her top.

When everyone had been given the antidote, Snape swept over to Malfoy's cauldron and took out the remains of the firework which Harry threw. The whole class stayed deadly quiet.

"If I ever find out who threw this, I will make sure that person is expelled!" Snape said quietly, his eyes boring into Harry's. "Get back to work."

Ten minutes later and not soon enough, Harry thought, the bell sounded indicating the end of the lesson and therefore allowing Harry to escape the dungeon and the constant gaze of Snape. They waited for Ginny to come from her class before heading towards Moaning Myrtle's bathroom.

"You got it all right then?" Ginny asked as Hermione dropped the ingredients into their cauldron.

"Yeah. Luckily," Ron said.

"Snape knew it was me," Harry told them.

"Just be glad he can't do anything about it," Neville said.

"I wish I believed that," Harry replied. "I really do."

-oOoOoOo-

As the week passed Ginny wasn't getting much better. They hadn't managed to get to the Room of Requirement since the first time they went and Ginny was slowly becoming more and more depressed. Harry couldn't wait for the holidays to start to be able to get her away from the constant talk of the Chamber of Secrets.

Harry, Ron, Neville and Hermione were walking back through the Entrance Hall one afternoon after a rather boring History of Magic lesson. Ginny was waiting for them at the bottom of the stairs. Harry noticed that her arms were crossed over her chest and her eyes kept leaping about, searching.

'Probably making sure that no one was trying to hurt her,' Harry thought, as they got nearer. Harry was glad that no one else could notice Ginny's un-easiness. Harry didn't know and didn't want to

know what would happen if they ever found out about Ginny.

"Hey Gin," Harry said greeting her.

"Hey," Ginny said looking up at Harry, smiling a very rare genuine smile.

"What's going on over there?" Hermione asked as she noticed a large group of people around the notice board, looking excited.

"I don't know," Ginny answered. "I tried going over there to look but there were too many people and I couldn't find out anything."

Just then, Seamus Finnegan walked out of the crowd and over to them. "They're starting a duelling club!" he said excitedly. "First meeting is tonight. Might come in handy one of these days, you know, with what is going on."

"You reckon Slytherin's monster can duel?" Ron said, laughing as he walked over and read the sign over the heads of the other people inspecting the parchment that was pinned to the notice board.

"I suppose not." Seamus said. "But the person who's controlling the monster or letting the monster loose...I mean we can duel them can't we. See if we can stop them setting the monster on us."

"But you're not Muggleborn," Harry said. "The Heir of Slytherin is only after Muggleborns. You heard Professor Binns last month. The Chamber of Secrets was built to get rid of people that apparently don't belong here. Which in Slytherin's view are Muggleborns. You're not in any danger."

"True," Seamus said. "But it couldn't hurt could it. Maybe help some Muggleborns if we ever come across the attacker."

Harry couldn't see any flaw in that logic and neither could the others so at eight o'clock the five of them joined most of the school in the great hall to attend the first lesson. The four house tables and the heads table were all pushed back against the far wall and in the middle of the Great Hall was a long golden stage with thousand of candles floating above it lighting the area. It looked like most of the

school was here. Ginny looked slightly nervous and Harry just gave her a warming smile of encouragement which she returned.

"Who do you think will be teaching us?" Hermione asked as they made their way into the room. "I heard Flitwick was a duelling champion and of course Dumbledore is one of the most prolific duellers around. I suppose there's a chance he could be teaching us."

"As long as it's not Lockhart," Ron muttered.

"Sorry to burst your bubble Ron." Neville said. "But that looks a lot like an idiot walking onto a stage which means it's Lockhart as he's the only idiot teacher we have."

"Wow Nev," Harry said looking at the youngest Longbottom.

"What?" Neville asked confused.

"Putting aside that sarcastic comments are my thing and not yours that was a very good insult," Harry replied.

"I was only speaking the truth," Neville said.

"What about Snape?" Ginny asked.

"He's a nasty teacher. A rubbish teacher. But he's not an idiot," Harry said. "Speak of the devil and he shall arise." Harry added as Snape walked up onto the stage following Lockhart.

"The two worst teachers in the school," Ron said. "Just great."

"Lockhart is not rubbish," Hermione said but her rant was cut short by Lockhart.

"Gather 'round, Gather 'round," Lockhart said standing in the middle of the stage. "Can everyone see me? Can you all hear me?"

"Unfortunately," Harry muttered to Ginny and she sniggered slightly, earning a scowl from Hermione directed at the both of them.

"Now, Dumbledore has given me permission to start this little duelling club to train you all up in case you ever need to defend

yourselves. As I have done on countless occasions. For full details, see my published works," Lockhart said, his massive shiny smile never dropping.

"Don't you just wish you could curse that smile off his face?" Harry whispered to Ginny.

"Why don't you?" Ginny whispered back. "I mean everyone thinks you're rubbish at magic. No-one will suspect that it was you."

"Don't tempt me," Harry replied.

"Let me introduce my assistant Professor Snape," Lockhart said. "He tells me that he knows a little bit about duelling and was very kind to agree to help me with a short demonstration. Don't worry I'll have your potions master back to you with no harm done, not to worry."

"Would be good if they finished each other off," Ron muttered, causing Neville to laugh quietly. Lockhart and Snape bowed to each other then raised their wands like swords in front of them.

"As you can see, we are holding our wands in the accepted combative position," Lockhart said addressing the way he and Snape now stood. "On the count of three, we will cast our first spells. Neither of us will be aiming to kill, of course. One – Two – Three!

Snape swung his wand up high above his shoulder crying out "Expelliarmus!" a flash of scarlet light came shooting out of Snape's wand and crashed into Lockhart. Lockhart was sent soaring into the air and smashed into the far wall. Whatever his detest of Snape, Harry couldn't stop feeling happy for what he had just done.

"Do you think he's alright?" Hermione said standing on tiptoe to see if she could find out herself.

"Who cares?" Harry, Ginny, Ron and Neville said together at once.

"Well there you have it," Lockhart was saying after getting unsteadily to his feet. "That was the disarming spell. As you can see, I've lost my wand. Thank you Ms Brown." Lockhart added as Lavender handed him his wand, causing her to blush excitedly. "That was an excellent idea to show them that Professor Snape but if you don't

mind me saying, it was very obvious and if I wanted to stop you it would have been all too easy. However, I thought it would be educational to let them see. However, I think that's enough demonstration for now. I'm going to come around and sort you into pairs. Professor Snape if you would like to help me?"

Unfortunately, just like last time Snape got to them before Lockhart did. "Time to split up the dream team I think." Snape sneered down at them. "Longbottom, let's partner you with Goyle shall we. Weasley... The male Weasley, let's try Crabbe. You Miss Granger can partner Miss Bulstrode."

Harry moved ever closer to Ginny. He wasn't going to let Snape partner her up with some Slytherin. "I don't think so Potter. Mr Malfoy, Let's see if Mr Potter's talk has any clout behind it," Snape sneered. "Maybe now you'll wish that you didn't taunt one of my students Potter. Always trying to take on people too big for you. Just like your father. Rather than running, he decided to duel Voldemort. He could of fled you know. He could have survived if he wasn't dumb enough to try to take on the Dark Lord. Maybe you'll learn an important lesson from this. Although you are your father's son. So I very much doubt it. And last Miss Weasley why don't we have you try out with Miss Parkinson."

However rather than walking towards Malfoy Harry stayed right near Ginny. "I'm partnering Ginny this evening," Harry said barely above a whisper. "Don't even try to break us apart."

"You will do as you're told Potter," Snape hissed out. "Or you'll be leaving."

"Fine," Harry said turning to Ginny. "Come on Gin. What could Professor Lockhart teach us anyway. He's a fraud." And they started to walk towards the door.

"Nice to know you don't have any actions to back up that mouth of yours which you're always threatening Malfoy with," Snape sneered.

"I'm not scared of Malfoy," Harry hissed out turning back to face Snape. The whole hall had gone quiet to hear this. Many people had learnt about the continuing hatred between Harry and Malfoy and were interested to see where this would lead.

"Well, to me you're walking out of the door when faced with Malfoy. If that doesn't shout out scared I don't know what does," Snape sneered again. "You've just got a big mouth with no actions to back it up. Unless of course you are going to come back it up?" Snape said nodding towards the centre stage.

"Harry," Ginny said quietly and Harry turned to face her. "Please shut Malfoy and Snape up. It would be nice of them to be quiet for once."

Groaning Harry looked towards the stage and then at Malfoy, and then at Snape. It was tempting, it was really tempting. However, how was he going to win without giving away that he was good at magic. Eyeing the stage and then eyeing Malfoy a smirk formed across Harry's face as he thought up the perfect plan to not only hide his abilities but also humiliate Malfoy in the process.

"Fine," Harry said, causing a surprised look to cross both Snape's and Malfoy's faces. They were obviously not expecting Harry to agree. Walking past everyone whispering Harry walked across the hall and jumped up onto the stage. "Anytime Malfoy."

Malfoy who had still had a surprised look on his face suddenly came to his senses and he too stepped onto the stage. "Time to go down Potter," Malfoy sneered as Professor Lockhart came onto the stage a bit nervously.

"You are just Disarming your opponents," Lockhart said as Snape came up behind Malfoy and leaned down to whisper something in his ear. He was obviously telling Malfoy the spell to conjure the snake. Harry really didn't care. It wasn't as if he was going to talk to it this time.

Once Snape had drawn away from Malfoy, Lockhart cleared his throat looking even more nervous than Harry thought possible. The crowd was eagerly awaiting the duel, desperately wanting to know the outcome of the mock battle. Ginny, Ron, Hermione and Neville had come to the edge of the stage looking on anxiously.

"On three you will cast to disarm your opponent. Disarm Only!" Lockhart warned giving both Malfoy and Harry a stare. "One... Two... THREE!"

Malfoy had started on the count of two and Harry had been anticipating this as he easily sidestepped the curse that Malfoy had shot at him. Turning to look at Malfoy, Harry just smiled and patiently waited for Malfoy to throw another spell at him. Malfoy frowned a little before sending the curse at Harry again which Harry once again side stepped.

"God Malfoy. You can't even hit me when I'm not doing anything, you're pathetic Malfoy. You probably couldn't even hit a giant if he was standing still with that aim," Harry said goading Malfoy.

Malfoy already incensed at Harry avoiding his spells grew angrier and started throwing all different kind of spells at Harry.

"I said disarm only!" Lockhart shouted but Malfoy didn't listen as he threw a continuous line of spells at Harry. Harry simply dodged by moving to the side or ducking. Enjoying himself Harry decided to entice Malfoy a little bit more by yawning.

"You know if you don't hit me soon we're going to be here all night," Harry said taking another dig at Malfoy, causing the Gryffindors in the room to burst out laughing.

Malfoy, getting angrier by the second paused to look at Harry. Malfoy gave a quick glance at Snape before raising his wand. Harry knew what was coming, even before Malfoy shouted "SERPENSORTIA". There was a loud bang as a black snake came out of Malfoy's wand.

There was a screams from the crowd as Snape lazily walked forward. "Don't move Potter," Snape said. "I'll get rid of it."

"Allow me!" Lockhart said as he waved his wand at the snake. There was a loud bang as the snake through fifty feet up into the air and then landed back down now hissing angrily. The snake now enraged dived straight towards the nearest person to it. Unfortunately, that person was Ginny.

Harry seeing what the snake was doing quickly flicked his wand towards the snake and bright yellow spark dashed out of his wand and landed just between the snake and Ginny. The snake faltered, stopping just short of Ginny. Hissing even more angry the snake raised it self up ready to strike her.



Seeing no other choice Harry acted. "Leave her alone," Harry hissed out to the snake. "Don't you even think about touching her!" The hall had gone deathly silent as the snake paused and turned its head towards Harry.

"You are a speaker!" the snake hissed at him and Harry could tell it was female by the voice.

"And you are a snake. This means you need to abide to what a speaker tells you to do!" Harry hissed at her.

"Can I not take one bite?" The snake hissed at him.

"If you try it will be the last thing you do!" Harry said pointing his wand straight at the snake.

"Very well," the snake said lowering herself. "What is it you wish me to do?"

"Curl up into a ball," Harry told her and Harry watched as the snake rolled it self up into a ball and then hid its head in its coils.

"You're no fun," Harry thought he heard her say but he wasn't sure. Suddenly the snake burst into flames and disappeared and Harry looked up to see Snape pointing his wand where the snake just was. Snape was giving him an expression of shock and Malfoy was trembling in fear. Harry looked over to Ginny and noticed that she too had fear in her eyes. Why? Harry didn't know. She knew that he was a Parseltounge.

Harry suddenly jumped off the stage, grabbed Ginny, and walked out of the hall. They were followed by Ron, Neville and Hermione, and surprisingly to Harry, Fred, George and Percy.

No one spoke as Harry led the eight of them along the corridors of Hogwarts. It wasn't until the group entered the common room and Harry lead Ginny over to the sofa by the fire did he turn to the others.

"You're a Parseltounge?" Ron said shocked. "Why didn't you tell us?"

"Well maybe because most Wizards think that Parseltounge is a sign of a dark wizard," Harry told them.

"But we're family," Percy said surprising Harry. He definitely wasn't expecting that from him.

"Yeah. Why didn't you tell us?" Fred asked.

"It's not like we would have cared," George said. "We know you're not evil."

"We're your brothers," Ron said. "Why would you think we would think any different of you?"

"I just..." Harry said overwhelmed. He didn't know what to say.

"This is bad though," Hermione said. "We all know that Harry isn't evil. But everyone else is going to think so."

"Yeah," Neville agreed. "Everyone's going to now think Harry is Slytherins great, great grand child or something."

"But I'm not!" Harry said.

"That will be hard to prove Harry," Hermione said. "Slytherin lived over a thousand years ago. For all we know. You could be."

"Yes that's true. But that also would mean that I'm the one attacking people and I know for definite that's not me," Harry said looking at Hermione. "Unless your suggesting I am the one attacking people."

"Of course not," Hermione said quickly.

"Whether you are the Heir of Slytherin or not," Percy said. "That won't stop everyone else thinking that you are."

"Well I don't care what everyone else thinks," Harry said. "Never have."

"Then why did you turn back to face Malfoy when Snape was enticing you?" Percy said. "It doesn't really matter now. It's happened. But people are going to think you're the Heir of Slytherin. And you have no proof to disprove it."

"Don't need to. As long as Dumbledore believes me," Harry said.

"Let's just hope he does," Percy replied.

Harry noticed that Ginny had stayed quiet through all of this conversation. Harry didn't know what was wrong with her but he wanted to find out. The way she looked after he had spoken to the snake irked him.

Five minutes later Harry found himself lying awake on his bed waiting for the others to fall asleep. It wasn't for another hour until he heard the snores of Ron coming through his hangings. Walking silently, Harry crept down to the common where Ginny was sitting by the fire.

Harry walked over to her and knelt down beside her. "Are you going to tell me what's wrong, Ginny?" Harry asked, taking her hand. "You knew I could speak Parseltounge."

"I knew that," Ginny whispered. "But I never knew I could."

"What do you mean you could?" Harry said frowning.

"I understood you," Ginny whispered and Harry looked at her in complete shock. "You told the snake to leave me alone. To not even think about harming me. Then you told it to curl up into a ball."

Harry didn't believe what he was hearing. How could have Ginny understood him. She wasn't being possessed by Tom at that moment. He was locked up in Harry's trunk. How could Ginny understand Parseltounge!

"Ginny... I..." Harry was lost for words. He wasn't expecting this. He didn't understand this. "I don't know. I just don't know. I mean you didn't understand it before."

"Doesn't mean I don't know," Ginny whispered back. Harry brought her down into a hug where Ginny cried silently into his chest.

"Why is this happening to me Harry?" she said tears rolling down her cheek. "Why me?"

"Shhh Ginny," Harry said trying to comfort her. "It's going to be alright. Being a Parselmouth is not that bad you know."

"I didn't mean it like that," Ginny said. "It just confirms that I really am attacking people, doesn't it?" Ginny's head dropped down and her hands lay in her lap as Harry held her.

"Were," Harry corrected her. "Were attacking people. Doesn't mean you will again. I know you won't. I won't let that happen."

"I know Harry," Ginny said looking up at him. "I trust you."

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Herbology lessons the next day were cancelled due to the continuous snow that Hogwarts was being bombarded with. This meant Harry, Ron, Hermione and Neville all sat in the library doing homework for the first period. Harry, doing an essay for Transfiguration, needed a book so he stood up and went to the transfiguration section of the library. Halfway there he overheard a girl talking.

"...I just can't believe its Potter," the girl was saying. "He's hardly good at magic. And he seems nice enough. He has a thing against Malfoy but everyone does. Are we saying he's evil just because he stands up to him?"

"Hannah," A boy said which Harry recognised as Ernie Macmillan. "He's a Parselmouth. Everyone knows that's a sign of a dark wizard. Have you ever heard of a decent wizard or witch that could talk to snakes? They called Slytherin himself serpent-tongue." And other people around Ernie murmured in agreement.

"Remember what was written on the wall. Enemies of the heir beware. Filch has a run in with Potter and his cat is attacked. Colin was annoying him with his photos. And then Colin is attacked also," Ernie said.

"But Harry and Colin sorted that out didn't they," Hannah said. "Harry told him why he hated being famous and why he hated his picture being taken and Colin stopped."

"Do you think the heir of Slytherin would have cared? Potter is good at acting we all know that because he's been pretending to be rubbish at magic," Ernie said. "Who knows what other dark art magic Potter has been hiding? And people are thinking that he's a squib? No one knows how Potter survived the killing curse when he was a baby. I mean, he should have been blasted into nothingness. Only a real powerful dark wizard could have survived that curse. I suppose that's why You-know-who wanted to kill him in the first place, didn't want another dark wizard competing against him."

Clearing his throat Harry decided then was the time to announce his presence. "Hello," Harry said and the look on the Hufflepuff faces was pure terror. "So... you think I'm attacking Muggleborns? Why? One of my best friends is Muggleborns. Why would I want to attack them?"

Ernie was looking at Harry in pure terror. "Well?" Harry asked him.

"You are probably trying to lull her into a false sense of safety," Ernie stuttered out.

"Hmm. Now that would be a good plan," Harry agreed. "If I was attacking people. Now you also mentioned Colin. I'll tell you what Hannah told you. We sorted that out way before the Quidditch match. And I was in the hospital wing asleep when Colin was attacked. Madam Pomfrey can vouch for me. And you mentioned how no one knows how I survived the killing curse. That I can definitely say you are wrong about that."

"What, someone knows how you survived it?" Ernie said curiosity getting the better of him.

"Yes. Dumbledore knows. And he told me how. And now I shall tell you to stop you thinking and spreading these rumours about me," Harry said. "I survived purely because my mother died. When Voldemort attacked my family he was only after one thing. To kill me. He wasn't after my parents. My father was killed because he tried to duel Voldemort. He could have stepped aside and let Voldemort go after my mum and me and Voldemort would of let him live. But he didn't. He wanted to give my mum a chance to run for it with me. Give me a chance to get away. When Voldemort killed my dad he went after my mum and me."

"My mum had run into my room and barricaded the door. But that didn't stop Voldemort." Harry said now with a look in his face as almost if he was seeing it happen in front of him at that very moment. "He blew the door off its hinges and walked into the room. Voldemort demanded her to give me to him. Voldemort wasn't after my mum, he would have let her live if my mum just handed me over. But she didn't. She loved me too much to do that. So Voldemort killed her."

"And that act is what saved me," Harry told them. "The most powerful magic in the whole world is the magic of love. My mum, sacrificing her life to try to save mine, gave me protection from Voldemort. Protection at its strongest. The protection of love. So when Voldemort turned his wand onto me and cast the killing curse on me. My mothers love for me protected me from the curse causing it to rebound onto Voldemort. And that is how I survived that night. There was nothing special about me that night. Nothing about me causing me to survive. It was my mother. The fact that she loved me so much that she put my life above hers. She died out of love to try and save me. And that Ernie is the power of love, the reason why I survived. Magic at its strongest."

Harry turned away from Ernie to leave him with those thoughts and saw not only Ginny, Ron, Neville and Hermione listening to what he had to say, but also a couple of older Gryffindors, Madam Prince, and Professor McGonagall. Ignoring them all of them he walked back to his desk, sat his book down he got from the shelf and continued to write his essay for McGonagall.

"You never said you actually knew what happened that night and why you survived," Ginny said sitting down next to him.

"Yeah. It's funny. But I don't particularly like talking about it," Harry said to her.

"I know, I understand. Well as much as I could," Ginny said. "I meant I understood that you don't normally like to talk about it. How did Dumbledore find all that out? If you don't mind me asking anyway" she said as Hermione, Ron and Neville sat back down in their seats.

Harry looked at them to see if they were far enough away not to hear before answering Ginny. "He didn't. I lied about Dumbledore telling me," Harry told her and she frowned in confusion. "When I

was younger I used to have nightmares about that night. At first, all I heard was my mother screaming. But as I got older I started to hear voices of my mum, dad and Voldemort. I managed to work out what happened that night from the voices, roughly."

Ginny looked at him in shock. "You never told me."

"Like I said. It's not something I openly talk about," Harry replied.

"Well thank you for trusting me," Ginny whispered.

"Anytime Gin," Harry replied smiling at her. "Any time."

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Harry often heard mutterings following him around in the last three days of term. He didn't care. It wasn't like it mattered what the others thought. Harry and Ginny would be going home for the holidays on Monday and Harry couldn't wait to get Ginny away from Hogwarts and get her home. When she got home, Harry hoped that Ginny allowed herself to properly relax, without having to worry about attacking students.

Fred and George didn't help making Ginny's mood any better. Fred and George took it on themselves to follow Harry about jokingly asking whom he was planning to attack next. As Ginny was with Harry most of the time, it caused Ginny to get upset. Harry had to drag Fred and George into a deserted corridor and speak with them privately to make them stop.

"I'm sorry," Ginny had cried once after Fred and George had gone away to their class. "I'm so sorry Harry. They all think it's you when it's really me."

"I don't care Ginny," Harry had replied. "I don't care if they think it's me. As long as they think it's me there's least chance of them finding out it's you and that to me is all that matters."

"I'm so sorry Harry," Ginny had repeated.

"I don't care," Harry said one last time.

The Monday couldn't come quick enough. Soon Harry's and Ginny's trunk were packed and they were waiting by the oak front doors in the snow for the thestral-drawn carriages to take them down to the train.

"Harry." Ginny said to him causing Harry to turn to face her.

"What if we do our homework on the train home? Then we don't have to worry about it when we are at home," Ginny said

"That Gin, is a brilliant idea. Get it out of the way. And surprisingly I only have essays to write," Harry said now smiling.

"So do I but isn't the automated essay writer packed?" Ginny asked.

"Yes," Harry told her. "Right at the top of the trunk. Our homework shouldn't last us five minutes using the essay writer." Just then the Carriages turned up and Harry and Ginny entered into one. Once they settled down the carriage moved off towards Hogsmeade station. Ginny looked back at the castle to see it slowly vanish around the corner as the carriage led them to the station.

"You don't think Hermione and the others will find out do you," Ginny whispered.

"They're questioning Malfoy," Harry said. "Malfoy doesn't know anything. There's no way on earth they will find out anything. No chance."

Smiling Ginny settled down next to Harry, leaning against him and closing her eyes. Harry dropped his arm over Ginny's shoulder, pulling her close to him.

"You don't know how glad I am to be going home," Ginny said her voice slightly muffled against Harry's chest.

"Oh I don't know," Harry replied as visions of him and Ginny sitting by a cosy fire in the Burrow playing exploding snap or reading or playing chess. Himself and Ginny skating on the frozen pond, or them building a snowman in the garden. "I think I might have a slight idea how glad you are."



Ginny snuggled closer to Harry trying to keep warm. "We'll that's good then."

"Yes," Harry agreed. "Yes it is."

A;N: now some of you might be asking... but didn't he say that it was going to be a long wait until the next chapter. Yes I was planning on a long wait. I wanted to get started on my own story. But guess what! I got a visit from doobby during the night and he did the chapter for me! Okay so some of you might not believe me but he did! Say thank you for doobby. And he might come back and do Christmas break for me to. He hasn't decided yet. I'll let you guys know in my yahoo group if he does or not :P C yah.

Disclaimer: I Do Not Own Harry Potter

Harry and Ginny walked along the corridor of the Hogwarts Express trying to find an empty compartment. Even though they were two of the first people on the train, it still managed to somehow fill up before Harry and Ginny could find a compartment for themselves. They walked the length of the train before finding an empty compartment right at the end. Harry opened the door, sighing in gratitude as he carried in his and Ginny's trunk and easily lofted them up into the baggage compartment above the seats by wandlessly casting a feather-light charm on each.

"Let me help," Ginny said as she saw what Harry was doing, but was too late as Harry, with one hand on each, put them on the racks. "How did you do that? They weigh a ton."

"I cast a feather weight charm on them," Harry told her, sitting down and smiling at her, "so it was very easy."

"I never saw you with your wand out," Ginny said, sitting down opposite him.

Harry shifted uncomfortably. In truth, he hadn't taken it out. However, he wasn't sure if he was ready to tell Ginny that he could do wandless magic yet. Although he trusted Ginny with any secret, he just wasn't ready to tell her that part just yet.

"Never mind," Ginny said with a wave of her hand. "I probably just missed it. Been too distracted."

"With what?" Harry asked gently. "I mean I understand about the Chamber of Secrets, but what were you distracted with between the castle and sitting down here?"

Ginny didn't say anything first before breathing slowly and muttering one word, "You."

Harry wasn't expecting that. Not at all. Ginny very rarely talked about her feelings for him.

"Oh. And how were you distracted by me?" Harry asked curiously.

"Never mind." Ginny said smiling, looking up at him now. "Forget I said anything."

"Ginny if you want to say something..." Harry told her, wondering what could have changed between the summer and now. Harry knew that he and Ginny had gotten closer, but he was still confused by what Ginny had meant by what she said.

"I told you," Ginny said. "Forget it. It doesn't matter." All of a sudden, the train carriage lunged forward as the train started to take them back to London. Ginny wasn't expecting the train to move and was thrust forward into Harry. He had to wrap his arms around her to stop her from falling.

"Thanks," Ginny whispered as Harry helped her onto the seat next to him.

"Well I couldn't exactly let you fall could I?" Harry said, extending an arm around Ginny and letting her snuggle up to him.

"Well you could have," Ginny said gently resting her head on Harry's chest. "But it wouldn't have been very nice of you."

"So I'm a nice person?" Harry jokingly asked.

"Of course you are!" Ginny said straight away. "You're kind, considerate; you care for others just as much as you care for yourself, if not more. You always do what's right and always put others needs in front of your own. Which sometimes can be annoying, but I wouldn't choose anyone else to be my best friend. That's what makes you who you are Harry."

"Well thanks Ginny," Harry said, thinking back. That was one of many reasons Ginny had told him in the future for why she loved him. And here Ginny was, giving him the exact same reasons of why he was her best friend. Maybe he was wrong that the summer. Maybe, just maybe, Ginny could fall in love with him because of him just being himself, rather than him having to rescue her from an evil wizard. How could he have been so stupid to realise the truth?

Harry had rescued her from the Chamber of Secrets, which of course made Ginny fall in love with him. However, he didn't rescue her the next year, or the year after that. It wasn't actually until

Harry's fifth year did Ginny need rescuing again. And it wasn't him that rescued her that time. It was Dumbledore and the Order. He didn't need to rescue her in his sixth year or the summer afterwards. Nevertheless, it was that summer that she first admitted that she was in love with him.

It might have been the Chamber of Secrets that made her fall in love with him, but it wasn't why she loved him. Not in the future. If Harry played to his strengths and showed the characteristics that Ginny had loved in the future, the same characteristics that Ginny had just named, maybe there was a chance that Ginny could fall in love with him without the Chamber of Secrets. Maybe, just maybe, Ginny could fall in love with him for just being him. After that thought, Harry seriously realised just how stupid he had been. How stupid it was to let her have the diary.

As Harry looked down at Ginny with a smile, Ginny smiled back and snuggled even closer to him. Maybe it was already happening now. Maybe, just maybe, at the precise moment, Ginny was already falling in love with him.

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After just relaxing and enjoying each other's company and talking about random things, Harry decided that they needed to get the Automated Essay Writer down and get their essays written before they got to London. The wind howled around the train as buckets of snow pelted against the window. The lanterns had to be lit in order for the students to be able to see what they were doing.

Ginny had a blanket covering her as she lay with her back against Harry, reading an old Quidditch magazine. Harry had cast the usual warming charm on her as the compartment wasn't very warm. Harry took his arm that was relaxed resting around Ginny's shoulders and put his hand on the page that Ginny was reading to get her attention.

"Hey," Ginny moaned out gently, smiling up at Harry. "I was reading that."

"I know." Harry said. "But I think we should get the essay writer down and get our essays sorted before we get to London. Then we can tell mum that we did our essays on the ride home." Harry, of

course, meant Mrs. Weasley. He had been calling her mum since the last couple of weeks of the summer holidays.

"How many essays do you have?" Ginny asked, sitting up.

"I've got three," Harry answered.

"Lockhart, McGonagall and Snape?" Ginny asked curiously, stretching.

"They gave you homework, too, then?" Harry questioned, getting his trunk down and putting the key into the second lock.

"How did you guess?" Ginny said, getting a quill and parchment out of her own old trunk that Harry had gotten down for her.

Harry opened up the trunk to reveal his Nimbus Two Thousand, Marauders Map, Invisibility cloak, Harry's very own snitch, and amongst various other things, the Automated Essay Writer.

Harry put the Essay Writer on the chair and went to close his trunk. "Isn't that the Marauders Map?" Ginny asked, looking into Harry's trunk. "And where are your clothes?"

"No, it's just some spare parchment," Harry lied quickly. He didn't want her to know he had it, for her name still was written as Ginny Potter. If she ever found out before he was ready to tell her, he didn't know what he'd do. "But I should be able to find that during the holidays. My clothes are in a different section. I have three key holes. I put my clothes in one section that can be opened with this keyhole here," Harry explained, indicating the keyhole on the left.

"I keep my other stuff, like my broomstick and Invisibility cloak and my snitch and stuff like that in another section that is opened with the middle keyhole." Harry explained to her.

"And the third section?" Ginny asked.

"I've only got a couple of things in there at the moment," Harry said. "Like the family album Mum and Dad gave me for my birthday, my Dad's diary of pranks, the phial that has the memory of my parents. And this when I can't wear it, like during Quidditch practise," Harry said, putting his hand down his top and bringing up the necklace that

Ginny had given him for his eleventh birthday. He also had the diary in that section, which he didn't want to let her know that he even had it. That would destroy any trust she had in him.

Ginny stared at it as Harry showed it to her before taking it gently in one of her hands and opened it up to reveal the picture of him and Ginny rolling on the grass of the Burrow having fun.

"You still wear this?" Ginny said, awed.

"I keep it on all the time," Harry answered. "Unless I physically can't. And then I put it in the third section of my trunk with the other items that are important to me."

"This is important to you?" Ginny asked, letting go of the necklace and looking up at Harry.

"Of course." Harry replied simply. "You gave it to me."

Ginny's face formed into a massive smile at those words and sat down next to the Essay Writer waiting for Harry to retrieve his essays from the machine..

After Harry and Ginny had sorted out their homework it was lunch time and they only had to wait for five minutes before the witch with the trolley came knocking on their door.

"Anything off the trolley, dears?" the witch said asking the two of them. Harry bought both him and Ginny some Pumpkin Pasties and some Chocolate Frogs, as well as some Liquorice Wands and a Cauldron Cake. He also bought them some Pumpkin Juice.

"You didn't have to buy me any of that," Ginny said. "We'll probably be having some tea when we get home to The Burrow."

"That's still a couple of hours away," Harry reminded her as he handed her a Pumpkin Pasty. "And I'm starving."

"But you're a boy," Ginny said, rolling her eyes. "You're always hungry."

"At least I'm not as bad as Ron," Harry pointed out, trying to defend himself as he sat back down. Ginny snorted.

"I don't think anyone can be as bad as Ron," Ginny replied, returning to her position of leaning against Harry.

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The rest of the journey was spent playing Exploding Snap and a few games of Wizard's Chess, both of which Harry won most. Harry didn't think Ginny was paying too much attention to the actual game. She was just too busy relaxing and being herself to care about the game, which was the whole point of going home for the holidays.

As the train continued South, the snow got started to fall a bit lighter but not by much. Ginny was reading her magazine whilst leaning against Harry. Harry had his arms around Ginny's waist, just sitting there watching her read.

The train was now near the outskirts of London, a couple of miles away from King's Cross Station. The snow had lightened a bit compared to Scotland, but it was still thick on the ground and it was still falling from the sky.

"Ginny," Harry said gently. "I hate to make you move but we're only five minutes from the station and I don't want you to fall off your chair again by a stop you're not expecting."

"Nearly home then?" Ginny said, closing the magazine.

"Yes," Harry answered, smiling.

"Great. I've missed mum and dad," Ginny said, stretching and yawning.

"So have I," Harry agreed. "And surprisingly enough, I miss Sirius, although I don't have a clue why."

"Hey don't be so mean," Ginny said, laughing.

"He would say the same," Harry retorted, defending himself.

"If Sirius jumped off a bridge would you do that too?" Ginny asked.

"Depends on whether he survived," Harry said shrugging, causing Ginny to shake her head. "What?" Harry asked her, causing Ginny to giggle a little. The train came slowly to a stop as Ginny grabbed a hold of Harry this time to make sure she didn't fall.

It was a busy rush for students to get off the train so Harry and Ginny decided to wait a couple of minutes before moving along the corridor and to the door leading down onto the platform. Once Harry had lugged their trunks down onto the platform Ginny followed him and they walked off looking for Mrs. Weasley or Sirius.

"Where do you think they are?" Ginny asked. "Do you think they might be waiting on the other side of the barrier?" Harry looked around and still failed to see his godfather. And he couldn't see the red hair of Mrs. Weasley either.

"Looks like it," Harry said, leading Ginny over to the barrier where a conductor was letting students through. Together they walked through the barrier after a dark haired girl and as they came out on the other side, they saw Mrs Weasley with a trolley.

"Ginny! Harry!" Mrs Weasley shouted, rushing over and giving both massive hugs.

"Hey mum," both Harry and Ginny said at the same time.

"Haven't you two grown," Mrs Weasley commented, eyeing both Harry and Ginny. "How was term?"

Harry glanced quickly at Ginny before replying, "Great. I'm getting much better at magic now and Ginny is great. She had top marks in her latest essays."

"That's wonderful love." Mrs Weasley said. She obviously had long forgotten about the Essay Writer, for which Harry was thankful for. "So you had fun?"

"Yes," Ginny replied, smiling "But I missed home a bit."

Harry and Ginny had decided not to tell Mr. and Mrs. Weasley about the Chamber of Secrets. Ginny was far too worried about what they may think of her. Although Harry reassured her that her brothers and



her parents would still love her and know it wasn't her fault, they had decided to keep quiet about the term's events for now.

"Where's Sirius?" Harry asked, looking around.

"Oh, he decided to stay at home," Mrs Weasley said. "Remus is staying for the holidays, too, so Sirius decided to stay with him whilst I came to pick you up."

"Dad's at work, isn't he?" Harry asked her, confused.

"Yes. His holidays don't start for another couple of days," Mrs Weasley explained, starting to walk towards the car park.

"So who's driving us home?" Harry asked, frowning. However, Ginny answered for him.

"Bill!" Ginny shouted after seeing her brother by the Ford Anglia and rushed over to him to give him a hug.

"Alright squirt?" Bill said, returning the hug. "Where's your partner in crime?"

Harry laughed and Bill looked up to see him. "Alright little brother?" Bill asked Harry.

"I'm not little!" Harry retorted.

"Of course you are!" Bill said, laughing and clapping Harry around the shoulders.

"Come on," Mrs Weasley said heaving the trunks into the boot. "We don't have all day. I suspect you're both starving and can't wait to get home for tea."

She shut the boot and climbed in the front seat next to Bill as Ginny and Harry got into the back. Bill had to wait a minute whilst a Muggle man was opening the boot of the car in front of them and Bill didn't want to run him over.

"ARTHUR WEASLEY!" Mrs. Weasley raged upon seeing the size of the boot of the Muggle car in front of her. Ginny, Bill and Harry shared a nervous look. "When your father gets home from work

tonight he is in trouble. Expanding the size of our boot without telling me, I mean to think he would get away with it. It's against the law to charm Muggle objects! He's the head of the Misuse of Muggle Artefacts office. It's his job to stop people doing this! Not do it himself!"

"At least she doesn't know it can fly," Harry whispered to Ginny and she giggled but was cut short by Mrs Weasley.

"FLY! What do you mean the car can fly?" Mrs. Weasley said, rounding onto Harry.

"Fly? When did someone mention flying?" Harry quickly said trying to cover his mistake.

Mrs. Weasley turned back around fuming. "Arthur Weasley, when you get home..." Ginny, Harry and Bill shared another uneasy look, knowing full well that their father was going to be in a lot of trouble when he got home that evening.

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The ride home lasted two hours. When the Ford Anglia finally turned up the cobble road which led to the Burrow, Harry was definitely in need of some food. The snow on the ground was extremely thick and more snow was still falling as the sky had turned dark. The lights were on in the downstairs of The Burrow and Harry could see four shadows in the kitchen window although there should have only been three: Sirius, Remus and Mr. Weasley.

When Bill brought the car to a stop, Harry and Ginny got out of the back seat and walked to the boot, waiting for Bill to open it so that they could get their trunks. Tired from the long journey, Harry and Ginny dragged the trunks from the car to the kitchen's back door.

Stepping into the blinding light, Harry had to squint and wait a couple of seconds before the kitchen came into view. Mr. Weasley, Sirius, Remus and a woman Harry didn't know sat around the table drinking hot chocolate from steaming mugs.

"Harry, Ginny," Mr. Weasley said, greeting them before getting up and hugging them both.

"Hey dad," both Harry and Ginny said. Harry was still staring at the women sitting next to Sirius. She had long, brown hair and sparkling hazel eyes. Her face was thin and she was a little smaller than Sirius by about half a foot. She was smiling at Harry a little nervously. She wore a dark black silk top that had a small brooch of a dragon pinned to it.

"Harry this is Jo," Sirius said to Harry. "Short for Joanne."

"Pleased to meet you." Jo said nodding. "Sirius has told me a lot about you."

"Err..." Harry started not sure what to say. "Wish I could say the same."

"This is my girlfriend Harry," Sirius said to Harry.

"Girlfriend?" Remus asked, confused. "Since when do we meet your girlfriends?"

"How long have you two been dating?" Harry asked.

Jo smiled before answering. "Since the beginning of October." Everyone stared at both Sirius and Jo. "What?" Jo answered nervously.

"You've been dating Sirius for two and a half months?" Remus asked.

"Err yes," Jo said looking at Sirius.

"Alright, knock it off," Sirius said, putting his arm around Jo.

"My God Sirius, you are actually in a serious relationship?" Harry asked.

"Yes," Sirius replied. "Now if you would be so kind to stop making Jo nervous."

"Sorry," Harry said, sitting down at the table.

"Yes sorry," Ginny said also sitting down next to Harry. "It's just that we've never meet any girlfriends of Sirius'. Mostly because they don't last longer than a week."

"Ginny!" Mrs. Weasley scolded her. "Be nice." She then turned to Jo. "It's a pleasure to meet you. You and Sirius seem happy."

"We are," Jo said nodding. "I'm just a little nervous meeting the family. And especially Harry." Jo added, looking at him.

"Me, why me?" Harry asked confused.

"Because you're his godson. It's like meeting the son of the man you're dating," Jo said.

"Oh okay," Harry said nodding. "We'll I'm happy for Sirius. He deserves someone and you seem nice."

"Thank you," Jo said.

"So how did you two meet?" Mrs Weasley asked.

"Long story," Sirius said.

"Then let's go to the living room." Harry said. "I want to hear this." And Sirius shot Harry an ungrateful stare. Now Sirius would have to explain it all, which caused Harry to grin mischievously. Slowly they all made their way into the living room and settled down for Sirius to tell the story.

He and Jo sat on the sofa together holding hands and Ginny and Harry sat down in the opposite sofa. Harry sat at the end and Ginny leaned against him, her legs stretched out along the sofa and her head on Harry's shoulder. Harry dropped his arm around her shoulder.

"Sirius didn't tell me you two were dating," Jo said, looking at the way Harry and Ginny was sitting together.

"I didn't know they were," Sirius said smiling at Harry and Ginny. Bill, Remus, Mr. and Mrs. Weasley eyed both of them in curiosity.

"When did you two start dating?" Bill asked.

"We're not," Ginny said nervously, blushing slightly and sitting up so she was no longer leaning against Harry.

"We're just good friends," Harry said. "We've always been close."

"We know that." Mrs. Weasley said. "It's just, well never mind. So tell us," She said to Sirius. "How did you and Jo meet?"

"We first met in the Leaky Cauldron," Sirius explained. "It was the first day after the kids went to school. I wanted to have a couple of drinks and go out for a night on the town."

"I had just got back from holiday in the south of France and I was taking a portkey home from Paris." Jo explained. "Paris is the only place you can internationally take portkeys to and from places in France."

"Jo, Harry, is just as good as you with the Floo Powder," Sirius said, smirking and Jo hit him playfully.

"Why did you hit him?" Harry asked smirking. "You don't know how good I am."

"Sirius told me you weren't very good at it," Jo answered and the smirk fell from Harry's face causing, Ginny to laugh.

"Thanks," Harry muttered.

"You should never tell any lies Harry," Sirius said laughing.

"Anyway," Jo continued. "After I had taken a portkey to the Ministry, I Flooed to the Leaky Cauldron as I live in walking distance from it. And like Sirius said, I'm not very good at it. So I fell out right into Sirius."

"After she had apologised, I offered her a drink and we got talking. Jo works for the Ministry of Magic in the Broom Regulatory Division," Sirius explained.

"It's my job to test all new brooms to see if they fly alright and also make sure that all the safety charms that are on them are all up to standard," Jo clarified.

"Cool," both Ginny and Harry said together and Jo laughed.

"Not as cool as you might think," Jo replied, "The companies like Nimbus and the newest company, Blazing Sun, try to get away with anything. Take Blazing Sun and their new broomstick, The Firebolt, for example."

"That broom has got everything. Pinpoint precision, unbreakable braking charm. It flies so smooth and the balance..." Jo said smiling now. "That broom is international standard, I'm telling you. National teams will want this broom for years to come to play in the World and European competitions. Yet it accelerates up to two hundred miles per hour in less than ten seconds. Does a hundred and fifty in five seconds. Compare that to the new Nimbus Two Thousand and One where it does a hundred in ten seconds. And sixty in five. It's just too fast. We're trying to get Blazing Sun to take it down to a top speed of one hundred and fifty and an acceleration of only a hundred in five seconds."

"And I'm the one who has to push the Firebolt to its maximum," Jo continued. "And when it accelerates to as fast as that it can be very dangerous. In my time testing out the new brooms, I have broken at least every bone in my body."

"That's still a cool job!" Harry exclaimed, causing Jo to shake her head.

"So, after a while we went back to Potter Manor and she stayed the night." Sirius said. "But what happened next I wasn't expecting."

"My god, you got her pregnant and that's why you're with her!" Harry exclaimed jokingly.

"NO!" Sirius said. "Anymore of those remarks Harry and you're in deep trouble. Say a prank maybe?" Harry gulped as he thought of a prank from a marauder heading his way.

"No," Jo said, smiling. "I'm not pregnant. I pranked Sirius." The whole room looked at her in awe.

"You pranked a marauder?" Remus asked for clarification.

"Yes," Jo said laughing. "It wasn't exactly that hard. And Sirius has been trying to prank me back ever since. He hasn't succeeded yet."

"This I have to hear!" Harry said. "Tell us how you did it."

"In my defence it was very early in the morning," Sirius muttered now sulkily.

"I put a potion in Sirius' coffee," Jo said. "It causes the drinker to take on the appearance of the opposite sex. And not just clothes but in appearance too. You should of heard Sirius voice! He was in hysterics because he couldn't do the counter charm. His long black hair was actually quite nice."

"I always thought you were odd," Sirius muttered. "Now I know you prefer females rather than males."

"I. Am. Not. Gay. Sirius Black!" Jo said, hitting Sirius around the head whilst the others laughed. "And if I was what would that say about you." And Sirius stopped baiting her.

"That wasn't the worst though," Sirius said and Harry wondered what could be worse than suddenly having a sex change. "The spell lasted all morning and I had an interview for a job at the Ministry at eleven. So whilst Jo went off to work I had to worry about what would happen if I turned up to the interview as a woman!"

"I take it that it didn't last then," Mrs. Weasley said sipping her tea that she got from the kitchen.

"Oh it did," Sirius said grimly. "I had to take the job interview as a lady. I got the job though."

"How?" Ginny remarked.

"I was the interviewee," Jo said, laughing her head off.

"I didn't know what the job actually was for," Sirius explained. "All I knew was it was a desk job at the Ministry. I mean anything is better than nothing isn't it? So imagine my surprise when I walked into the office I was having the interview in and Jo was sitting there behind the desk waiting to start."

The whole room burst out laughing. "We've been dating ever since," Jo said.

"Yes," Sirius said grimly. "I've been making my own coffee in the morning and not letting Jo anywhere near it."

"Ah come on," Jo said. "You can't deny it wasn't funny. And your face when you saw me in the office was priceless."

"Well it's nice to meet you," Mrs. Weasley said, "but it's time for tea." With that, they returned to the kitchen to have a nice helping of scrambled egg and bacon.

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After tea Harry and Sirius were set to return to Potter manor and Ginny stood in the kitchen doorway watching.

"How long will you be?" Ginny asked. "I mean you're staying here tonight right?"

"Not long," Sirius said. "Harry just needs to get some clean clothes and repack. We will be back within the hour."

"Can I please not travel by Floo?" Harry moaned out.

"How else do you expect to get back?" Sirius said, grabbing the pot of Floo Powder from above the kitchen fire.

"Estelle," Harry said. "Or you could Apparate me there."

"I haven't done side-long Apparation in ages," Sirius said. "Now stop moaning and take the Floo Powder."

"See ya' Ginny," Harry said sulkily, throwing the powder into the fire and stepping into the warm whirlwind of hot ash sucking him towards Potter Manor.

As he arrived, Harry felt his feet crash into the floor and he bent his legs to absorb the impact. And miraculously, Harry didn't fall over. Gob smacked, Harry stood up out of the fire and looked around. He landed on his feet? He had never landed on his feet before. He was



lucky if he landed on something soft to keep the impact from killing him!

Suddenly there was a loud crack as Sirius Apparated into the kitchen. "Sirius!" Harry exclaimed. "I landed on my feet!" Sirius snorted.

"What?" Harry asked.

"Nice joke Harry," Sirius said. "Now go get some new clothes."

"I really did land on my feet," Harry insisted, annoyed that Sirius didn't believe him.

"Yeah right," Sirius said in a disbelieving tone. "Harry we don't have much time. It's late."

Harry walked out of the kitchen and into the lobby of Potter Manor to go up the steps to his bedroom. At least Ginny would believe him. She always did, and for that he was grateful.

Once he got to his bedroom, he closed the door and turned around to see a portrait watching him, smiling.

"Greetings Harry," the portrait said. "And a Merry Christmas. I would have thought you would have stayed at Hogwarts for Christmas."

"Erm," Harry said. "I wanted to bring Ginny home for the holidays."

"Oh, is she not feeling very well or not liking it at Hogwarts?" the portrait of the man asked.

"Well this term..." Harry started. How was he meant to admit to his ancestor what happened this term? What he let happen, he'd be lucky if Godric ever spoke to him again.

"Harry?" the portrait of Godric Gryffindor asked. "Is everything okay?"

Harry's first impulse was to lie to Godric.. To say everything was fine and nothing was wrong. But he couldn't bring himself to lie to a good friend, so Harry silently walked over to his bed, sat down at the end and looked at Godric.

"No," Harry said silently. "Everything is not okay. Ginny..." Harry was lost for words to what to say to Godric. He had never told him about his decision about the Chamber of Secrets. Or even that it was opened this year.

Harry took in a breath before explaining. Godric was looking at him, worry etched into his face.

"What's wrong?" Godric prodded. "Is Ginny alright?"

"No," Harry responded.

"Why?" Godric said, sounding shocked. "What's the matter?"

Harry still couldn't bring himself to explain about letting Voldemort possess her. So he bid his time, trying to delay the inevitable.

"What do you know about The Chamber of Secrets?" Harry asked Godric.

Godric facial expression changed to astonishment. "The Chamber of Secrets?" Godric whispered. "That rumour is still going around today?"

"What do you know about it?" Harry repeated, ignoring his question.

"It was a rumour that started after the argument with me, Helga and Rowena about letting Muggleborns to attend Hogwarts. The rumour goes that before he left, Salazar built a Chamber of Secrets and hid a monster, which only he and his heirs could control, inside it and locked it," Godric said, eyeing Harry with curiosity. "It was said that only he or his true heir could ever open it and unleash the monster within. Complete rumour though." Godric added. "I mean I, along with Rowena and Helga, searched the whole school for the hidden chamber. We did not find it. And if we couldn't find it, then it obviously doesn't exist."

"The entrance is in Moaning Myrtles bathroom," Harry said quietly.

"Moaning Myrtle..." Godric said, confused.

"Oh right," Harry said suddenly remembering that Godric wouldn't know who that was. Moaning Myrtle was after his time. "The girls' bathroom on the second floor."

"So it exists?" Godric whispered, terrified.

"Yes," Harry replied. "And it was opened fifty years ago, and again this term."

"Opened..." Godric said faintly. "But when it is opened the monster is meant to kill Muggleborns..."

"Yes I know." Harry whispered.

"So...Wait. Voldemort is Slytherins heir..." Godric said. "Does that mean he is back at Hogwarts again this year?"

"In some sort of way, yes," Harry said vaguely.

"Harry. You're not making sense," Godric said. "Obviously when it was opened fifty years ago he was a student. How is he doing it now?"

"Fifty years ago the school was being threatened with closure. Therefore, Voldemort stopped attacking people and set up Hagrid to take the blame for the attacks," Harry explained.

"That's why Hagrid was expelled", Godric said.

"Yes," Harry answered, nodding his head.. "Voldemort was known then as Tom Riddle. Tom Marvolo Riddle. Named after his Muggle father."

"Salazar must be turning in his grave," Godric muttered. "His line being contaminated with Muggles. In his words, of course, not mine. But that was fifty years ago. Voldemort doesn't have a body. So he's possessing someone else this term?"

"Yes," Harry said. "In the lesser content yes. But not as his barely alive self that he is now."

"Harry, you're not making sense again," Godric said.

"Well when he was forced to stop opening the chamber fifty years ago he left behind a diary with a sixteen year old version of himself in it. So whoever wrote in the diary gave Voldemort strength and allowed him to possess them and force that person who wrote in the diary to open the Chamber of Secrets," Harry explained.

"My lord." Godric said. "That's the diary. The Horcrux diary isn't it?"

"Yes," Harry said nodding.

"Who has the diary Harry?" Godric asked. "Who's being possessed by Voldemort?" Harry stayed quiet, not having the guts to tell him.

"Ginny isn't having a good term..." Godric muttered to himself, thinking and then it hit him. Godric looked at Harry with wide eyes. "No," Godric simply said, shaking his head. "No. you wouldn't. You...you...you wouldn't make her go through that," Godric stammered looking at Harry, hoping that he would say that his conclusion was wrong.

"She's your wife," Godric stated. "You...you love her. You wouldn't let her go through that. Would you?" Harry didn't say anything but just looked down at the floor.

Godric looked at Harry in disgust. "YOU LET YOUR OWN WIFE GET POSSESSED BY VOLDEMORT!" Godric screamed.

"It's not that simple," Harry said quickly.

"NOT THAT SIMPLE!" Godric roared. "OF COURSE IT IS! YOU LOVE GINNY. SHE WAS GOING TO GET POSSESSED BY VOLDEMORT. SO YOU STOP IT. HOW IS THAT NOT SIMPLE?"

"I wanted her to love me," Harry said, quickly trying to explain. "I didn't want to ruin her life by being in a loveless marriage."

"SO YOU LET HER GET POSSESSED," Godric roared. "HOW IS THAT LOGICAL?"

"On our wedding night..." Harry said. "We... We told each other when we fell in love with each other. I told her that I fell in love with her during the summer between my sixth and seventh year. Ginny said it was when I rescued her from the Chamber of Secrets. I did it

so she wouldn't be in a loveless marriage. I didn't want to ruin her life by forcing her to be married to someone she didn't love. I know I was wrong to let this happen. That's why I've taken the diary away from her. I just... I just didn't want to lose her Godric. Losing her to death is one thing. Losing her because she doesn't love me... I don't think I can handle that."

"Oh Harry," Godric said now gently shaking his head. "You didn't think that once you tell Ginny that you're from the future and about all of this that she wasn't going to hate you after learning that you let her go through all of this? If anything Harry, you have literally made sure she would hate you. And she would be in a loveless marriage."

"She'll understand," Harry whispered tears streaming down his cheek. "Or she would have. But I didn't know it affected her this badly. I didn't know. I don't know how she will react when I tell her."

"So how is she? Really?" Godric asked.

"I've only seen her this bad once before," Harry said. "And that was when her whole family died, apart from Ron."

"My lord," Godric said.

"I'm helping her though," Harry said. "I'm helping her get better. She's terrified but I'm trying to help her get past it. I know its going to take sometime but I'm trying to help her get better."

"Well at least that's something," Godric said. "Why didn't you talk to me about this? I would have told you how stupid this was. And what about Dumbledore and Sirius? They let you go through with this?"

"They didn't like it." Harry said. "Both Dumbledore and Sirius said I shouldn't go through with it."

"And they were right," Godric said.

"I know, I know," Harry said. "If I could go back and change my decision..."

"Why can't you?" Godric asked. "I mean. You went back in time before."

"It was a one off spell," Harry said. "I can't do it again."

"So what now?" Godric asked.

"Now?" Harry said. "Now I clean up. Get the clothes I came for. Go back to The Burrow where Ginny is waiting for me. And continue helping her so she can get better."

"And what about Ginny being your wife?" Godric asked. "And Ginny being in a loveless marriage?"

"I'll do what I should have done in the first place," Harry said. "I'll leave it alone. Ginny fell in love with me because I rescued her from the Chamber of Secrets. However, it wasn't why she loved me. I should have worked that out in the summer, instead of on the train ride home.

"She married me because she loved me, Harry Potter. Not some hero that rescued her in the Chamber of Secrets." Harry continued.. "If I be that Harry, that Harry she married, that Harry she loved, then there's a great chance that she could still fall in love with me."

"That Harry," Godric said. "I could have told you this summer."

"I know," Harry said, wiping his eyes with the back of his hand. "I'd better get my clothes and back to Ginny. She'll get worried if I'm too long."

"Take care of her," Godric said. "I know I've never met her, but she is family. I want her happy. I want both of you happy."

"I will," Harry said nodding. "Don't worry, I will."

-oOoOoOoOo-

That evening Harry lay awake in Ron's bedroom at The Burrow, thinking about how now that he was home he could cheer up Ginny. Looking across Ron's room towards the window, he saw the snowy sky outside. There was loads of things he and Ginny could do this break. And he didn't care what they did as long as it made Ginny better.

There was a creak as Ron's bedroom door opened and shut and Harry looked up to see the outline of Ginny creeping into the room.

"What you doing in here Ginny?" Harry asked, causing her to start slightly.

"I didn't know you were still awake," Ginny whispered.

"I was thinking what we could do this break," Harry whispered. "But what are you doing here Ginny?"

"I couldn't sleep," Ginny replied.

"Ginny this is home!" Harry said. "Nothing is going to hurt you here. No one is going to make you do anything!"

"But what if I hurt them," Ginny whispered.

"You won't," Harry told her, but he could see Ginny was worried. Sighing, Harry got out of bed.

"You can't do this for the rest of your life Ginny," Harry told her. "You need to learn to sleep on your own again."

"I know Harry," Ginny said looking up at him. "I know. But please. Just for tonight?"

Harry looked at her in her night dress shivering in the cold. "Just for tonight." Harry said. "And only for tonight."

"Thank you," Ginny whispered.

"Just for tonight though," Harry repeated, leading her over to the bed. "Get in."

"But..." Ginny whispered. "Can't you just conjure up a bed like you did in the hospital wing?"

"We're not at Hogwarts anymore Ginny," Harry explained to her. "If I did magic I would be expelled."

"Okay," Ginny said uneasily as she got under the covers. Harry threw the covers around her and then lay down on top of them. Therefore, Ginny was under the covers whilst Harry was on top.

Ginny watched him for a minute and Harry smiled at her. Ginny closed her eyes to go to sleep and Harry did the same, both falling into the blackness where dreams ruled their minds and even the wildest thoughts becomes reality.

A/N: Well I must say I know not a lot happens this chapter. Because mainly it was planned for the whole holidays to be just this one chapter. But it is getting to big so I cut It into two different chapters. hope you had fun reading. C yah.



Disclaimer: I Do Not Own Harry Potter

Harry awoke very early the next morning. The sun hadn't even crept past the horizon to announce the new day. Harry tried to sit up to think before he realised that someone was stopping him from moving. Ginny lay next to him, lying on top of his right arm. Her head rested on his chest. She was breathing gently and had a little smile on her face. Somehow during the night Harry and Ginny had moved closer in their sleep. A lot closer.

Harry looked up at the clock to see that it was five in the morning. Mrs. Weasley would be up soon to feed the chickens. If she saw him and Ginny like this...Harry tried to move his arm from under Ginny but he was too afraid to wake her. She needed her sleep if she was going to get better.

Thinking, Harry knew there was only one way. He had to do wandless magic. With his free hand, he cast a silent levitation spell and he felt Ginny's body become weightless. Being careful not to wake her, Harry levitated Ginny's body an inch off the bed so he could get his numb arm from under her.

After he had some feeling back in his arm, he got out of the bed and slowly levitated Ginny back down onto it. She stirred slightly and Harry held his breath, wondering if she was going to wake before she finally sighed and relaxed. Harry released a breath he didn't know he was holding before going to his trunk and finding some clean clothes he could change into.

Harry took his clothes and left his room, going into the bathroom to have a wash and get dressed. Afterwards, Harry headed back to Ron's bedroom where Ginny slept peacefully. Harry went to the edge of the bed and knelt down beside her. He didn't want to wake her. But this was his room. And he couldn't let Mrs. Weasley know that Ginny had slept in here, let alone in Harry's bed last night. It was perfectly innocent. She just needed to feel safe to sleep and the only place she felt safe was near Harry. But he didn't think that Mrs. Weasley would see it that way.

Harry took another glance at the Chuddeley Cannon clock that hung in the room and saw that it was now five thirty. Mrs. Weasley would be up any minute and he needed to get Ginny back in her room. He

didn't want to levitate her down the stairs. The only way was to wake Ginny.

Harry put his arm on Ginny's and gently rocked her, trying to wake her up. Ginny moaned out and pushed his arm away before snuggling back down into the covers. Chuckling slightly to himself, Harry shook her a bit more and Ginny opened her eyes.

"Hey sleepy," Harry greeted her, smiling.

"What... what t-t-time is it?" Ginny asked, trying to stifle a yawn.

"Five thirty," Harry told her and Ginny pushed Harry away.

"Then let me sleep," she groaned, pulling the covers over head.

Harry pulled them back. "I really would love to Ginny. But I'm not sure how your mum will react to finding you sleeping in my bed."

At hearing these words, Ginny's eyes flew wide open. She looked around confused as to why she was in Harry's room. Then she remembered last night and blushed slightly. "Oh, right."

"Hey," Harry said. "Why the blush? It was perfectly innocent. You were just trying to sleep. But I'm not sure if Mum will see it that way. So you need to get back to your room."

"Right," Ginny replied, looking around disorientated. "Yes."

Slowly she got out of bed and sleepily walked towards the door. Harry put a hand on Ginny's arm as she walked past him and she turned to look at him.

"Nothing happened last night," Harry told her, smiling down at her.

Ginny's head dropped down. "I was just being stupid wasn't I?" she asked.

"No," Harry said, gently putting his hand under Ginny's chin and lifted her head so she was looking at him. "It's understandable with what's been going on this past term. But I promise you. It has stopped now."

Ginny nodded. "I know. I mean, no one is going to hurt me here. I mean this is my family. And you're my best friend. The most important person in my life. No one is going to hurt me here. I was being stupid."

"No Gin, not stupid." Harry told her. "Just believe that it's over. Because it is, you know. It's all over. I'm not going to let anyone make you do anything against your will."

"Thank you," Ginny whispered.

"You're welcome," Harry said as Ginny turned and left the room. Harry made his bed before heading down stairs to find Mrs, Weasley bustling around the kitchen. Sirius was sitting at the table drinking a cup of coffee whilst Jo pouring herself a cup of tea.

"Morning Harry," Sirius said. "What are you doing up early?"

"Hoping to catch you before you go into work," Harry said.

"Well, as I'm not going into work, you'll be fine then," Sirius answered, taking a sip of his coffee. Harry looked at him, confused.

"Harry, Sirius is my assistant. If I'm not at work, what is the point of Sirius being at work?" Jo said from the chair sitting next to Sirius. She had a cup of tea rather than coffee in her hands.

"None," Harry said.

"Our exact point," Sirius said

"So why aren't you going into work today?" Harry asked addressing Jo.

"I take the Christmas holidays off," Jo explained,

"They allow you to take all of the holidays off?" Harry asked, amazed.

"Well they did this year," Jo explained. "There's nothing for me to do at the moment, no new broom for me to test or reports to work on. The Firebolt is currently having some changes done to it and

Nimbus hasn't got a new broom for us to try out yet. So nothing to do at work really, apart from paper work. And who wants to do that?"

"Cool," Harry said. Thinking that now would be a perfect time to talk to Sirius without Ginny being about yet. He then asked if he could talk to Sirius privately and the two of them walked out of the kitchen and into the living room so they wouldn't be overheard.

"What's up Harry?" Sirius asked. "I forgot to ask how Ginny was doing. Is she alright?"

"No," Harry said. "Did Dumbledore tell you what happened?"

"Yes," Sirius said, "he mentioned it."

"I should have listened to both of you. I should have never let her have that bloody diary," Harry told him angrily.

"You can't change that now," Sirius replied. "So what is you wanted to talk to me about?"

"The Marauders Map," Harry told him. "As Ginny is my actually wife her surname is coming up as Potter and not Weasley. Is there any chance to change it so it reads Weasley? Otherwise Ginny and the others are going to be asking questions about where it has gone."

"Hmm," Sirius said, thinking. "The type of magic to do that was your fathers and Remus's work. I, of course, helped research for the map. However, they cast the spells. I wouldn't know where to start to change her name. But I'll bet Remus does."

"But Remus doesn't know that I'm from the future," Harry said. "We can't go and give him the Marauders Map saying 'here fix it'. He will want to know why Ginny's name is Potter!"

"We can't tell him the truth?" Sirius asked. "I mean, I hate keeping secrets from my best mate. Let alone my girlfriend, Harry."

"You're NOT telling Jo," Harry hissed out. "I like her but I don't even know her."

"I'm not asking permission to tell Jo," Sirius said. "But why not tell Remus? You trust him right?"

"The same as I trust Mum and Dad," Harry replied. "And you and Dumbledore. But I was only ever planning on letting three people ever know. You, Dumbledore, and Ginny when she is ready. That's all the people I ever wanted to know."

"So how do we explain this to Moony?" Sirius asked.

"We better think something up," Harry said, "because I don't particularly want to explain it all to him."

Harry watched him try to figure out what they should do when something seemed to come to him. "You know. I don't think we have to. Wait here. I'll see if Moony is up."

Harry didn't know what Sirius worked out but he trusted his godfather enough to wait. As Sirius walked into the kitchen, Remus came down the stairs.

"Ah Moony," Sirius said, coming back out of the kitchen, "can we have a word?" Remus looked confused, but followed Sirius back into the living room."

"We need a favour with the Marauders Map," Sirius told him when he was sure no one could overhear the three of them."

Remus raised his eyebrows. "Why? What's wrong?"

"Well you see it's Ginny," Sirius said, starting to explain. "Or rather Ginny's name on it. It comes up with Ginny Potter rather than Ginny Weasley."

Remus eyebrows rose to his hairline. "That's impossible," Remus whispered. "The map never lies." Harry looked at Sirius, wondering how they were going to get out of the hole Sirius just suddenly dug them in too.

"We know that," Sirius said. "What we need is for you make it say Ginny Weasley rather than Ginny Potter. If it's possible."

"But..." Remus said his head burrowed. "How come her name is Ginny Potter... it's impossible."

"No its not," Sirius answered, looking at Remus. "We know why her name is Ginny Potter on the map. We just need it to say Ginny Weasley."

"But why would it say Ginny Potter in the first place," Remus asked, confused.

Sirius sighed before answering. "We can't tell you that. No one knows that her surname is Potter rather than Weasley apart from Harry, Dumbledore, me, and now you. And we can't tell you why. I'm sorry Moony but we can't. What we do need to know is can you make it lie and say Ginny Weasley?"

"I'm not sure," Remus said. "But what does this mean? Her surname is Potter. Lily and James didn't have another child."

"She's not my sister," Harry said.

"But... Then why...?" Remus muttered again.

"We can't tell you," Sirius stressed.

"Where is the map?" Remus asked.

"In my trunk upstairs," Harry said. "We can't tell you why her name is Ginny Potter. It's just is. But we need the map to say Ginny Weasley instead. Can you do that?"

"I'll need to have a look at the map..." Remus said slowly.

"Of course. I'll give it to you once I get it from upstairs," Harry said.

"We just need it to say Weasley Moony," Sirius said. "Even if you have to make it lie. It has to say Ginny Weasley. No matter what."

"And you're not going to tell me why it says this?" Remus concluded.

"We can't Moony," Sirius said.

"But you know why?" Remus asked.

"Yes," Harry replied.

Remus looked between the two and then shrugged. "I'll see what I can do. I'll have to have the map whilst Ginny is at school in order to test it out and have a look at changing her name."

"That's fine," Harry said.

"Thank you," Sirius said.

"Ginny doesn't know does she?" Remus stated suddenly. "That her name is Ginny Potter."

"No," Harry said.

Remus eyed Harry for a second before smiling. "I'll see what I can do."

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It was another hour before Ginny finally showed herself. She had come into the kitchen, rubbing her eyes sleepily, trying to wake herself. She had must of fallen back to sleep when she got back to her room, Harry reckoned. Which was a good thing.

"Morning sweetheart," Mrs. Weasley said from the stove cooking breakfast.

"Mor – Mor – morning," Ginny said yawning.

"Did you sleep well last night?" Jo asked. "You seemed to be tossing around a lot early on last night before you stopped." Jo and Sirius were staying in the room next to Ginny's. Ginny's eyes quickly flicked over to Harry and back again before saying yes.

"Good. Now eat up," Mrs. Weasley said, sliding three sausages, four bits of bacon and two eggs onto Ginny's plate. Harry and Ginny ate gratefully. "What do you two plan on doing today?"

"Well I thought as it stopped snowing we could go play in the snow," Harry said. "Build a snowman maybe."

"You two have homework to do first," Mrs. Weasley said, sitting down to her breakfast.

"We did our homework on the ride home, mum," Harry told her.

"Smart boy," Jo said between mouthfuls of egg.

"Well, I will want to look over it before you two go do anything," Mrs Weasley said. "Just to see how good it is."

"Sure mum," Ginny said, a grin forming on her lips.

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Once the two of them finished breakfast, they hurried upstairs to fetch the essays they put through the writer yesterday and gave them to Mrs. Weasley to look over. Once she was satisfied that their homework was to a good enough standard, Harry and Ginny put there essays back into their trunk so that they wouldn't forget to take them back to school. Harry waited while Ginny changed and they then came downstairs to put on their hats, coats, and scarves so they wouldn't get cold in the snow.

When they got outside, Ginny shivered slightly and Harry thought about casting a warming charm on her with wandless magic, but decided against doing so. Instead, Harry decided to warm her up by playing. Making sure that Ginny's back was turned before bending down, Harry hastily made a snowball and stood back up, hiding it behind his back.

"So what do you want to do first, Gin?" Harry asked her, making sure the snowball was hidden from view.

"Don't mind," Ginny said. "I'm just glad..." But what she was glad about Harry didn't find out because he threw the snowball at Ginny, hitting her and causing her to stop talking in mid sentence.

Ginny looked in complete shock at her now snow covered coat and then back at Harry. Harry still silently smiled at her but stopped when a rather well known mischievous smirk came across Ginny's face.

Taking a step back Harry put his right hand out to protect himself. "Now Ginny, that was just a playful throw mind."



Ginny, however, wasn't listening. She bent down and made herself a massive snowball. "Come now, Ginny. Is it necessary to make one that big? Think about this for a second. I mean, I have been helping you out this term."

"If I throw this snowball will you stop helping me?" Ginny asked, gently standing back up and holding it in her right hand.

"Well, no," Harry said. "But..." He was cut off as the snowball that Ginny had held in her hand smacked him right in the face. Ginny burst out laughing as Harry wiped snow from his eyes.

"So you want to play that game do you?" Harry asked.

Ginny looked back at him, smiling, and then nodded. Quickly, Harry bent down and tried to make a snowball to throw at her. However, Ginny was quicker. When Harry stood back up to aim, another snowball smashed into his already snow covered face and Harry had to shake his head to be able to take aim at Ginny. When the snow had left his eyes enough so he could see, he saw that Ginny had taken off running from Harry and towards the stream and the wood near The Burrow.

Chasing after her, Harry threw the snowball at her and it just missed her by an inch. Turning her back to see Harry, Ginny stuck her tongue playfully at him before bending quickly down in mid run and scooping up some snow to make another snowball.

For hours they threw snowballs between them, some hitting, some missing. Unfortunately, Ginny's expertise at playing Chaser helped her amazingly and nine out of ten times her snowballs hit Harry dead on. Harry's aim wasn't as good so Ginny wasn't as covered with snow as Harry was.

Harry chased her all the way around The Burrow, laughing and slipping as he tried to catch up with her. As they came to the front door, Harry managed to grab Ginny and together the both fell to the ground, rolling in laughter.

As Harry lay in the snow, he started to tickle Ginny and she started to squirm away from Harry, but he was too quick for her. He pinned her arms to the side of her with his knees allowing his now free hands to tickle Ginny relentlessly and Ginny screamed out in

laughter. For five minutes, Ginny was pinned to the floor, Harry tickling every inch of her body. Ginny tried many times to get the upper hand and to turn the tables on Harry but for some reason she couldn't. Finally, after trying to push Harry off and getting rather cold lying in the snow Ginny gave up.

"I give," she laughed out, trying to squirm away from Harry's hands. "I give."

Stopping, Harry sat back up so he was still straddling Ginny's waist. He didn't trust her. Ginny never gave up in a tickling match. She always won.

"Do you want to get off me Harry?" Ginny said, smiling ear to ear. "It's just a bit wet lying in the snow and were both soaked."

"So lying in the snow won't make any difference will it?" Harry replied to her. "I've never won before. I want to make the most of it."

"I never gloat after I win," Ginny said, managing to free her hands from under Harry's legs.

"Oh what a lie," Harry said, adjusting his position and making sure Ginny's hands was safe away from his side.

"Fine," Ginny exclaimed. "I always gloat. Now will you get off me?" Ginny said, pushing against Harry's chest, but Harry grabbed both her wrists and then pinned them down above her head so there faces was inches away from each other.

"I swear it was never this hard before," Ginny said. Harry and Ginny's faces were so close now. "So what are you going to do now Harry. You have me at your mercy." Ginny asked gently, smiling and Harry blinked for a second as he swore he saw Ginny's eyes flick to his lips.

"Well I don't know," Harry replied. "Whatever I want," Harry said as he looked down at her sparkling brown eyes and then at her beautiful smile.

"And what is it you want?" Ginny asked, whispering.

"Harry! Ginny! Lunch time," Mrs. Weasley called from the kitchen door, her voice travelling around to the front of The Burrow. Harry jumped at her voice and looked down at Ginny smiling.

"Come on," Harry said, getting off Ginny. "We will want to warm up before lunch." Ginny, confused at suddenly being free from being pinned from Harry, frowned before getting up.

"Sure," Ginny said, looking at Harry. She followed him back to the kitchen doorway.

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Harry went into his bedroom to quickly change his soaking wet clothes into warm dry ones. As he started to get changed he pondered about what had just occurred. After five minutes, he came to only one conclusion. He had slipped up. He nearly kissed Ginny. He was caught up in the moment and if he were being honest with himself, he would have kissed her if Mrs. Weasley hadn't called out. He had to be more careful. What on earth would Ginny think if her best friend, the friend she has feelings for and she thinks has no feelings for her suddenly kissed her. If anything, she'd be confused.

After pulling on dry clothes, Harry walked out of the bedroom and down the stairs and met Ginny near her bedroom. Ginny smiled at him when she saw him and walked down the stairs with Harry.

"What do you want to do after lunch?" Ginny asked as she led the way down the spiral staircase.

"I thought as we played outside this morning we could do something inside this afternoon. Keep warm, as it is cold outside," Harry replied as they came into the kitchen.

"Like what?" Ginny asked.

"Play chess," Harry suggested. "Or just relax by the fire in the living room. Whatever you want."

"I like the sound of that," Ginny said, looking up at Harry.

"Then that is what we will do!" Harry announced.

Therefore, the rest of the day Harry and Ginny relaxed inside The Burrow. They played Wizard's Chess for a while, and when they became bored, they switched to playing Exploding Snap. They ate some sweets that were left over from the train journey and relaxed on the sofa by the fire.

They had tea when Mr. Weasley arrived home from work with the Ministry and they had spaghetti and meatballs. The rest of the evening was spent with the family, hanging out in The Burrow laughing and talking. Harry noticed that Ginny and Bill weren't as closed as he remembered and wondered why. Then he realised that his memory of Bill and Ginny being close was of last time around. This time Ginny had Harry growing up and never had to build a close relationship with Bill. Although Bill was definitely still her favourite brother. He guessed it was easier for Ginny to get closer to someone closer in age. And it helped that Harry wanted to be that person Ginny came to whenever she had a problem.

That evening Ginny stayed in her room and Harry laid awake thinking about Ginny. She was doing a lot better than Harry expected her to be. They had only been home for a whole day and yet Ginny seemed to not worry as much as she did when she was at Hogwarts. She also seemed to finally trust Harry and not be afraid that her family would find anything out. He was glad that she was all right and even more glad that he had decided to take the diary away from her so no harm could be done.

-oOoOoOoOo-

The week that led up to Christmas was the best week of the year so far in Harry's opinion. Harry thought that coming home to The Burrow would help Ginny a lot. But he never realised just how much it would help her. Ginny lazed around the Burrow without a care in the world all week. Whenever Harry met her gaze, Ginny always had a blazing smile on her face.

Harry couldn't help but feel happy that Ginny was finally getting over the last term. Or at least not worrying about it while she was here. Ginny had even started to crack jokes again. Something Harry hadn't heard her do since that summer. Soon Christmas morning arrived and Harry was rudely awakened at seven by a red headed female tickling him out of pure joy.

"Is there any reason why you woke me up early this morning?" Harry asked, bleary eyed as he reached for his classes.

"Presents!" announced Ginny, grinning as if it were the most obvious thing in the world.

"You know we have to wait until after breakfast to open them. Plus you ruined a perfectly nice dream I was having," Harry told her.

"Oh?" Ginny asked, a sparkle coming to her eyes. "And what was the dream about Mr. Potter?"

"Wouldn't you like to know?" Harry said to her.

"Yes," Ginny said, "I would. Why on earth do you think I asked?" Ginny added, rolling her eyes. Harry got out of bed and tickled her side in reply. Ginny skipped away from Harry, a playful glow in her chocolate brown eyes.

"Was that a challenge Mr. Potter?" Ginny asked him

"I believe it was Ms. Weasley," Harry said, smirking.

"You think that's wise?" Ginny asked, rolling up her sleeves.

"I won last time didn't I?" Harry reminded her.

"Even more reason for me to try my hardest," Ginny said.

Harry, realising his sudden mistake, gulped before running out of his room, Ginny following him close behind. Ginny caught up with him on the bottom step of the stairs that led into the kitchen and Harry and Ginny both fell to the floor. Ginny hands a blur as Harry tried to get out of arms reach.

"Merry Christmas to you, too," Mr. Weasley said from the kitchen table.

"Merry... Christmas... Dad..." Harry puffed out between bouts of laughter, Ginny laughing along with him.

"Merry Christmas Dad," Ginny laughed out as she dodged Harry's latest effort to tickle her back.

"You two are in a good mood this morning," Jo commented from beside Remus.

"It's Christmas!" Ginny exclaimed, her hands finding every inch of ticklish skin on Harry's body whilst Harry failed miserably trying to tickle her back. "Give?" she asked Harry as she grabbed his hands and held them away from her sides.

"For now," Harry grumbled out, eyeing Ginny in case she made a fresh attack. She stuck her tongue out at Harry and he seized his chance. As quick as lightning he caught her tongue between his thumb and forefinger.

"Wathhh thhhe?" Ginny said in surprise.

"Now I will give you your tongue back if you promise not to tickle me anymore," Harry told her.

"Youth shtarted it," Ginny moaned out.

"And I'm finishing it," Harry said playfully. "Now promise not to tickle me."

"Thor how long?" Ginny asked.

"Forever?" Harry suggested, but by the look of Ginny's gaze, he realised that he wasn't ever going to get her to agree to that, no matter what. "Fine. For the rest of the Christmas holidays." Ginny looked at Harry sceptically and Harry returned the stare. "Fine." Harry relented. "How about you're allowed to tickle me only if I start tickling you first?"

"Buth you wonth sthart ith," Ginny said.

"I know," Harry said smiling. "Brilliant plan ever, if I do say so myself."

"Fineth," Ginny said and Harry let go of her tongue.

"Are you two quite finished?" Mrs. Weasley asked from the kitchen stove where she was cooking pancakes.

"Yes mum," both Harry and Ginny said together.

"Good," Mrs Weasley said. "Now sit."

Harry and Ginny sat at their usual places at the table and waited for Mrs. Weasley to place the usual Burrow Christmas Brunch of pancakes, bacon, and sausages on their plates. As Mrs. Weasley was giving Remus his food, Sirius came down the stairs.

After a rather joyful Christmas breakfast the seven of them then went into the living room and settled down to open their Christmas presents. Ginny sat on the sofa closest to the fire with Harry sitting beside her. Mr. and Mrs. Weasley shared another sofa whilst Remus sat in a single chair. Sirius and Jo were sprawled out on the floor. As they were the closest to the tree, they were nominated to hand out the Christmas presents.

Jo handed Ginny the first present and Harry noticed that it was from her mother. Ginny carefully unwrapped the present and out fell the usual Weasley Jumper with some sweets. Smiling, Ginny put on the jumper.

Sirius got a present next. It was apparently from Remus. Sirius opened it up to reveal posh quill and stationary set.

"Since when do I need these?" Sirius asked Remus.

"Are you or are you not a secretary?" Jo asked him.

"So?" Sirius asked confused.

"Sirius, do you actually do any work when you're in the office?" Jo asked him.

"Me, work?" Sirius joked. "You really don't know me very well Jo. I'm disappointed."

Jo rolled her eyes. "Stop messing around and say thank you."

Chuckling, Sirius put the posh stationary set down on the floor next to him. "Thanks, mate. I was running low on ink and quills and parchment. Hey, my work may actually be neater now."

"Thank God. I could hardly read your writing," Jo muttered.

"Then why the hell did you hire me woman!" Sirius demanded.

"You're nice eye candy when I'm bored," Jo said, sticking her tongue out, causing Sirius to laugh.

Sirius then handed a present over to Harry. Harry, frowning, unwrapped the paper to find an old wooden chest with a lock. Harry looked around and couldn't find a key anywhere. "How exactly am I meant to get into this chest?" Harry asked Sirius.

"With a little help from Ginny," Sirius said, going over to the tree and getting a small present and handed it to the redhead. Ginny opened it to see a little box with an opaque lid. In the box was a key.

"So you own the chest and Ginny owns the key," Sirius explained. "Which means it's both yours. And you need each other's approval to use what's inside. I thought that would be useful so you can't use them on each other. Unless, of course, the other agrees to it."

Ginny opened up the box and took the key out and handed it to Harry. Harry placed the key in the lock and turned it. With a click, the lid opened slightly and Harry lifted it to see bottles and bottles of potions. Lying on top was a bit of parchment with writing on it.

"What are these?" Harry asked taking a small phial out and looking at it.

"All sorts of potions. But most are helpful with pranks," Sirius explained. This made Harry and Ginny's face turn to shock.

"Did you really think me and Remus wouldn't hear about the Ghosts of the Marauders?" Sirius asked, laughing.

"What do you mean Ghost of the Marauders?" Mrs. Weasley asked, eyeing them suspiciously.

Harry and Ginny shifted in their seats. "It's a group, Molly, that Harry, Ginny, Fred and George have made. Like the Marauders." And to everyone's surprise, Mrs. Weasley sighed.



"I can't win can I? No matter what, you will always encourage them to pull pranks," Mrs Weasley said, shaking her head.

"Molly, it's only a bit of fun. Harry and Ginny know the importance of a good grade ,too," Sirius said.

"Harry and Ginny might, but Fred and George don't. All they want to do is pull pranks," Mrs Weasley said.

"Molly, Fred and George are bright kids. They'll do what is right. Not necessary by you. They will do what is right for them. They won't end up jobless and wandering the streets," Sirius said. "Look at me. I was a Marauder and now I've got a job."

"I know. But it took you a while to get one. I'm just worried for them," Mrs. Weasley said.

"We know, Molly dear," Mr. Weasley said. "But we have to have faith in them all to know that they will do what is right for them. And not having a job isn't right for them. And I have faith that Fred and George know that too. They're bright boys. They'll be fine."

"So..." Ginny said, looking at the potions. "What do they do?"

"Well, it's a different potion for different things," Sirius said, turning his attention back to the chest. "This one here..." Sirius said, taking out a bright blue potion, "will turn the drinker into a pig. They will turn back after a little while. And this one here," Sirius said, pointing to a green one, "will make your hair turn into snakes. I thought that one would be good to use on those Slytherins." Sirius then lifted the box out and Ginny and Harry saw that there was another level under that. And another level under that. And another one. Sirius lifted five levels out, and Harry suddenly realised that they all couldn't fit in the size of the chest and that the chest must be magically expanded. Sirius finally stopped after pulling out the sixth box out and took out a phial with clear liquid. He then turned to Ginny and handed it out to her. "I think you might like this one."

Ginny's face looked at the phial before turning back to Sirius. "If you think I'm going to drink anything you give me out of that chest you have to be mad," Ginny said.

"Trust me. It won't hurt. I actually think you'll enjoy this. I wouldn't do anything that you wouldn't like. Not with your parents and Harry here. Drink it. You'll have fun I promise," Sirius said, holding out the phial to her again. Ginny slowly took the phial of clear liquid from Sirius hand and looked at Harry.

"He knows I will kill him if he hurts you. I think it will be okay," Harry said to Ginny. Ginny nodded. She then took out the cork, took a deep breath and downed the potion. Ginny waited for something to happen, but nothing did.

"Okay what's meant to happen?" Ginny asked, looking around and then at herself.

"Nothing straight away. It will take some seconds to start working," Sirius said. However, after thirty seconds nothing had changed about Ginny.

"I guess it didn't work," Harry said.

"I take it so," Ginny said, putting her hand on her stomach. "Although I feel really bloated at the moment.

"It's working, then," Sirius said smiling.

Harry watched Ginny carefully and saw that Ginny was rubbing her stomach and started to lye back down on the couch. "I feel so light headed," Ginny said, closing her eyes.

"Well, yes, there is probably a reason for that," Sirius said.

"And what may that be?" Harry asked. "You said this wouldn't hurt her."

"It won't. It's part of the potion," Sirius reassured Harry.

"I feel so light," Ginny suddenly said. "Like I don't weigh anything."

"Yes. You probably don't," Sirius said, eyeing her. Harry looked at Ginny carefully and saw that her pyjamas were hanging off her and the sofa where she was suddenly sitting was no longer sagging under Ginny's weight. And as he looked, Harry saw an empty space coming between Ginny's bottom and the sofa. To Harry's utter

amazement, he realised that Ginny was floating. Harry watched amazed as Ginny slowly started to drift upwards.

"Ginny!" Mrs. Weasley said, shocked as Ginny started to float higher. Ginny floated like a feather all the way up so that she was near the ceiling.

"I feel so weightless. It's almost like I'm flying," Ginny cried in awe.

"Ginny open your eyes," Harry told her. Ginny opened them and saw the ceiling and a look of shock came over her face. She looked down and saw that she was floating.

"What the!" Ginny exclaimed, suddenly going stiff and putting her hand on the ceiling. "What's going on? Get me down."

"Ginny, it's okay, calm down," Sirius said. "It's a weightless potion. It makes you lighter than air. And gives you the ability to fly, apparently. I never tried it. To manoeuvre yourself about you do the same actions as if you were swimming. I know you love flying so I thought you'd like this. Try moving about. It's just like you're swimming."

Ginny slowly and steadily put her arms out in front her and very slowly pulled them back as if she was in water. And Ginny suddenly started moving forward. Slowly and steadily, Ginny lifted her legs so she lay horizontally behind her and her arms stretched. Ginny took a deep breath before moving her arms be her sides as if she was doing the breaststroke. And Ginny suddenly started to move forward. Ginny turned around in mid air and did the same again in another direction. Ginny then laughed out. Harry looked at her face and could see that the shock and worry was very quickly changing to wonderment and enjoyment.

Ginny suddenly looked down and put her legs high up in the air and pulled her out stretched arms down to her side and she flew down heading towards the floor. Ginny put her arms to her side suddenly and pushed them forward in order for her to stop herself flying into the floor. She stopped, hovering a couple of feet above the carpet. Ginny then using the same technique flew slightly higher had over to Harry, laughing all the way.

"I love this. Harry you have to try this. It's so much better than a broom," Ginny said. "You feel very weird at first. But then it goes and...this is just great! You have to try this."

Harry turned to the chest, but Sirius stopped him. "You have other presents to unwrap first. Maybe if you're good you can drink some potions for fun later. Right now, Ginny needs to stop flying so she can open the rest of her presents," Sirius said, getting an orange colour potion out. Sirius held out the potion for Ginny to take.

"Do I have to?" Ginny whined, pouting in mid air and Harry thought she looked very funny and very cute at that precise moment.

"No," Mrs Weasley said, "but you won't get any more presents if you don't." Sighing, Ginny flew over to Sirius and took and drank the orange potion. Ginny waited a couple of seconds before her hand flew to her mouth. A loud burp came out and Ginny promptly fell to the floor.

"Owe," Ginny moaned out. "That hurt." Sirius just chuckled as Ginny moved across the floor and over to the sofa to sit back next to Harry. Harry watched her carefully and Ginny smiled at him as she sat back down and leaned against the armrest.

"So those potions are both of ours?" Ginny asked him, burping again.

"Yes. The chest is Harry's. And the key is yours," Sirius explained. "The chest automatically locks itself when you close the lid," Sirius explained as he put the last of the boxes back into the chest and closed the lid. "The instructions will tell you more about what else is in the chest and what they do. But I thought you might like that one, Ginny."

"Yes," Ginny said, smiling. "I did."

As they continued with opening presents, Harry notice Ginny get a Herbology book from Neville and a book about the Chuddley Cannons from Ron. Ginny supported a different team to Ron, but Ginny hadn't plucked up the nerve to tell him. Hermione's present to Ginny was Hogwarts: a History. Harry shook his head and Ginny chuckled as she put it with her other presents.

Harry received sweets from Ron and a broomstick servicing kit from Neville. Harry wondered what Hermione would get him when he turned thirteen now that Neville had given him this now. His broomstick did need a clean, come to think about it. Ginny also got some more glamour potions from Fred and George, which would be useful for the future term. However, Harry was hoping that Ginny wouldn't need them. Harry also got the yearly Weasley jumper that Mrs. Weasley gave everyone.

Soon they were down to the last two presents. And as usual, they were the presents Harry and Ginny had given to each other. Ginny carefully unwrapped the present to find a ring. It was silver and had no markings on it what so ever. She slipped it on her right middle finger whilst smiling adorably at Harry. Mr. and Mrs. Weasley shared a knowing smile.

Harry unwrapped his present to find a new watch. It was very nice and was definitely better than his cheap tacky one. Putting it, on he smiled at Ginny, who was playing with the ring on her finger.

They put the left over wrapping paper away and Harry and Ginny lugged there new presents up to their rooms. When Harry and Ginny got to Ginny's room, Ginny put all her presents on her bed and turned to look at Harry.

"Why did you get me this ring Harry?" Ginny whispered, still playing about with it on her finger.

"Because it isn't a normal ring," Harry said, putting his presents down on the floor. "Where is your wand Ginny?" Harry asked her and Ginny went to her bedside table and grabbed her wand. "Okay, now tap it."

Ginny tapped her wand on the ring and it glowed white for a minute before going back to its normal plain silver. What did that do? Harry heard Ginny thinking and smiling, Harry replied in her mind.

It allows you to communicate with me with your mind, Harry replied to her in her head and Ginny's face that was looking at the ring shot up to look at Harry.

'Harry?' Ginny said in her mind.

Yeah, it's me, Harry said, nodding but not speaking. "Tap it again and it closes the connection so that I can't hear your thoughts. It will work from a distance, too, and it should work around Hogwarts," Harry said aloud this time and Ginny tapped the ring. Ginny stayed silent for a minute before smiling back at Harry.

"You don't ever have to worry about anything now, Ginny. Even if you're on your own. You will be able to communicate with me all you like," Harry said. "It's for when you go back to Hogwarts."

Ginny rushed over to Harry and hugged him. She wasn't saying thank you. She just showed her appreciating in her hug. "I don't know what to say. Thank you seems to be well... an understatement."

"Just make sure you use it if you need to," Harry said. "I don't like seeing you hurt. This term has been horrible for both you and me. I hate it when I see you like that Ginny." Ginny pulled back and smiled up at Harry and Harry pushed a stray hair from Ginny's face so he could see it clearly. Ginny's smile was as big as ever and her hands rested on Harry's chest.

"I know I keep saying it. But you are the most important person in my life. I don't know what I'll do without you," Ginny said "Please never leave me," Ginny added in a whisper.

"I will NEVER leave you Ginny," Harry said taking both of her hands in his. "Never. Don't ever think that. I will never leave you. I promise."

"I'll make sure you keep that promise," Ginny said, putting her head against Harry's chest.

"Make sure you do," Harry said.

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When Harry and Ginny got back downstairs, everyone else were sitting in the living room chatting.

"So what are you two planning to get up to today?" Bill asked from the sofa.

"We're going to go build a snowman," Ginny said, heading towards the back door.

"We are?" Harry asked, turning to look at her.

"Yup," Ginny said, smiling. "We will both make a snowman and then you will come and say which one is the best."

"Oh I will, will I?" Bill asked, raising his eyebrows.

"Yes," Ginny said walking into the kitchen. "Unless you want a bat bogey hex," she added teasingly.

"Of course I will be the judge," Bill said in a fake joyful voice, causing everyone to laugh.

"And you will pick mine won't you," Ginny called from the kitchen.

"Hey!" Harry shouted to her. "That's not fair."

"You win some you lose some, Harry," Ginny called back. "Now are you coming? Otherwise I'm going to get a big head start."

Laughing, Harry went outside and both of them had fun making snowmen.

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They spent the rest of the day outside playing in the snow. Harry caught Ginny playing with her ring quite a few times whilst they were playing and when Ginny saw that Harry noticed, Ginny just smiled silently and stopped only for Harry to catch her at it again not five minutes later.

Harry didn't know why Ginny loved the ring so much. However, he could see that she did. They laughed about having fun in the garden and when it was no more than a half an hour before Christmas dinner, Bill came out to judge the snowman.

"Overall, I think you both definitely have potential," Bill said in a mock posh voice. "However, I think that the clear winner here has to be Ginny."

"You're only saying that because you're afraid of her bat bogey hex," Harry said, pouting whilst Ginny did a celebratory dance.

"Wouldn't you be?" Bill replied.

Ginny laughed and took Harry's hand in hers. "Stop being a big baby and come get ready for dinner. You know mum cooks the best Christmas dinner."

"You haven't had a Christmas dinner at Hogwarts yet," Harry told her.

"Nor have you," Ginny said looking up at him, confused.

"I know, but apparently to Ron it's really good," Harry replied, trying to save his slip up.

"It's Ron, Harry," Ginny said, rolling her eyes and dragging him by the hand. "I'll be very surprised if anything surpasses mum's cooking, especially at Christmas." And Harry realised that statement was properly very true.

When Harry and Ginny came down from changing, Harry saw that the table was full of food. The biggest turkey Harry had seen lay in the middle of the table. Harry and Ginny took the two empty seats and sat waiting for Mrs. Weasley to cut the turkey first.

The dinner was just as delicious as always. Mrs. Weasley had outdone her self again. They had parsnips and Brussels sprouts, as well as sausages wrapped in bacon and other Christmas food.

For pudding, Mrs Weasley brought out the usual chocolate log and Christmas pudding, as well as mince pies and ice cream. All too soon, the wonderful feast was over and Harry and Ginny sat in the living room together waiting for the dinner to go down before going back outside.

"How much longer do we have to wait mum? It will get dark soon," Ginny moaned as Mrs. Weasley came into the living room. She looked outside, then at the clock and sighed. "You promise you'll be careful. Harry, if the pond isn't thick enough...."



"We won't skate on it, I promise," Harry said. Mrs. Weasley nodded and Ginny jumped off the sofa and pulled Harry to the kitchen to get his skates. Together, they walked outside towards the forest and where the lake ran.

When they got to the pond, Ginny quickly put her skates on and tentatively step onto the ice. "You know, mum asked for me to test it first," Harry told her.

"Come on, Harry. We've been skating on this pond since I was five. Your telling me you can't tell by just looking at it if it's okay or not?" Ginny said, skating towards the middle of the pond.

"It's completely fine, look," Ginny said and she brought her foot up and slammed the skate back down onto the ice. Nothing happened. "You can tell it's fine so stop being a spoil sport and come out to meet me."

Shaking his head at Ginny's boldness, Harry put on his skates, skating out to meet her. "Not so bad is it?" Ginny said mockingly.

"Shut it you," Harry said, shoving her gently so that she moved back a bit. Ginny came to a stop and eyed Harry.

"Tag?" Ginny asked, although Harry knew it wasn't really a question.

Harry nodded and raced off towards the other end of the lake as Ginny raced after him. When they got to the end, Harry turned in a semi-circle to try and get passed Ginny to be able to head back to the other end of the pond, but Ginny was a better skater than him. Ginny caught up with him and pushed him gently in the back, shouting loudly, "Tag!" before rushing off and leaving Harry behind to chase her.

It was difficult to catch Ginny. She was very good at skating and it took a good ten minutes for Harry to catch her. Ginny was skating down the middle of the pond and Harry was coming at her from the side of her. Harry headed instead of at her, but to just in front of her to the place Ginny was headed.

Ginny, who realised this, tried to stop but she couldn't change direction in time. Harry came close enough to her to wrap his arms

around Ginny's waist and together they spun slightly and Ginny had to put her arms around Harry's neck in order for her not to fall.

"Caught you," Harry whispered to her. "Do I get a prize?"

"Depends," Ginny whispered back.

"On?" Harry asked her.

"On whether I'm feeling generous," Ginny said, eyeing Harry's lips.

Harry saw her eyes flicker to his lips and Harry's breath caught in his throat. Should they kiss? Ginny was doing a lot better now. But that was probably because she was at home. What would happen when they got back to Hogwarts? Undoubtedly, Ginny would start to worry again. If truth were told, Ginny wasn't completely over the Chamber of Secrets, even though she was more cheerful now.

Harry looked from her lips and into Ginny's eyes and was shocked to see how strong the emotion was there. It was oddly familiar and Harry's stomach lurched. Harry wanted to kiss her. And he had no doubt in his mind that Ginny wanted him to kiss her. But the problem was, was it the right time?

The answer to what to do, however, was taken out of his hands when Ginny unwrapped her arms from Harry's neck and skated backwards a bit.

"Sorry," Ginny whispered.

"It's alright, Gin," Harry said taking her hand.

Ginny squeezed it gently before letting go and skating around the pond again. For a further thirty minutes, they skated around chasing each other around before Ginny got tired and sat down by the pond's edge.

"Have fun?" Harry asked Ginny, sitting down next to her.

"Yes," Ginny said, shivering slightly and Harry put an arm around her. "It's starting to get dark. The sun will be setting soon."

"I know," Harry agreed. "Come on." Harry said to her standing up and grabbing Ginny's hand to pull her up. "Change your skates. I want to show you something." Looking at Harry intrigued, Ginny changed into her normal shoes and, after Harry did the same thing, followed him through the woods.

Harry led Ginny into a clearing. The view was spectacular. Beneath them lay the woods and just beyond the woods was the little town of Ottery St. Catchpole. Sitting down in the snow, Harry tugged down Ginny down so she sat next to him.

"How did you find about this?" Ginny said, looking out over the town, obviously enjoying the view.

"My secret," Harry said. "But you're the only other person who knows of this place. And I want to keep it that way."

"Of course," Ginny said, turning her head to look at Harry. "I promise not to tell anyone."

Harry lay back in the snow and Ginny lay down next to him, shivering some more. Harry put his arm around Ginny and pulled her close to him to keep her warm.

And there they lay, the two of them silently enjoying each other company, keeping warm by snuggling up with each other. They watched as the sun got lower in the sky and the stars started to shine brightly in the cold night air.

"We better get back soon," Ginny said as her head lay on Harry's chest, looking up at the starry night sky.

"Yes, we should," Harry agreed, taking her hand in his. "Mum will get very worried if we don't get back soon. She'll be mad because it is dark."

"I don't want to leave though," Ginny whispered. "It's beautiful up here."

"So true," Harry said as he watched Ginny looking up at the stars.

"Harry? Ginny?" They heard a faint call of their names.

"That will be mum looking for us," Ginny said, lifting her head off Harry's chest and looking behind her into the woods.

"We'd better go then before she gets really mad at us and grounds us," Harry said and sighing, Ginny sat up.

"Thank you for bringing me here Harry," Ginny said as she gazed up at the newly showing stars. "You really made this Christmas a really special one."

"I just wanted you to relax," Harry said, getting up and extending his hand to Ginny so he could pull her up.

"I did," Ginny said smiling at him. "Thank you. This break is just what I needed. A relaxing Christmas was just what I wanted."

Harry smiled at Ginny as he led her by hand back towards the lake. "So it was a relaxing Christmas I gave you."

"I'm glad you will always be here for me," Ginny said, laying her head against Harry's shoulder as they walked back to the pond. "Because I wouldn't want it any other way."

"Neither would I Ginny," Harry said. "Neither would I."

A/N: Close to Nine thousands words. Christmas break is always big. Hope you enjoyed. Especially the last part. I actually had another version on how that last part worked out but I decided that what happened would be too soon in the story line so I deleted it and you got this version. The other version is posted on my yahoo group if you interested in reading what happened. To readers. I'm sorry about uploading it and taking it down a couple of times. I noticed mistakes which I wanted sorted.

Disclaimer: I Do Not Own Harry Potter

A couple of days after Christmas, Ginny was brought a reminder of Hogwarts. This dampened her spirits only slightly as a brown owl came flying towards them one morning whilst they were out playing in the snow. When Harry took the letter from the owl, he recognised Ron's handwriting immediately.

Ginny had gone ghostly white and Harry put an arm around her shoulders. "They wouldn't have found anything out Ginny," Harry reassured her, but Ginny was still eyeing the letter worriedly. Deciding that opening it now was a good idea, Harry pocketed the note and took Ginny indoors where they made their way to Ginny's bedroom. Sitting on Ginny's bed, Harry opened the letter with one hand whilst holding onto Ginny's slightly shaking hand with the other.

Harry smiled at the content of the letter and read it aloud for Ginny to hear..

Dear Harry and Ginny,

The Polyjuice Potion went off really well, even though only Neville and I went into the Slytherin common room. Hermione still wonders how Ginny managed to recognise the cat hair but I told her, Ginny, that you were a great cat lover and you would be able to easily recognise it from a distance.

We found out that Malfoy doesn't know anything. Which means he's not the heir of Slytherin, and he had no clue who was attacking the students. Hermione was annoyed that we didn't find out who it was. I was so sure it was Malfoy. Although you were somewhat apprehensive about him so we have to say you were right, Harry

How was your Christmas? Thanks for the sweets, Harry. Ginny, the Chuddey Cannon hat was good, too. Thank you both. I have to go now. Hermione is moaning at me to do my homework. She also says that she hopes that you two are not leaving yours to the last minute.

Ron

Harry put the letter on the bed and looked at Ginny for her reaction. She had her eyes closed.

"Ginny?" Harry asked, squeezing her hand. Ginny suddenly let out a sob. Confused, Harry pulled her into a hug.

"What's wrong?" Harry asked her.

"Nothing," Ginny mumbled into his chest whilst Harry ran his hands through Ginny's hair, trying to sooth her.

"It's obviously not nothing," Harry said. "Otherwise you wouldn't be crying."

"I'm not upset," Ginny whispered. "I'm just relieved. They didn't find out it was me."

"I told you they wouldn't," Harry said, rubbing her back to try and calm her. Ginny sighed and rested her head on Harry's shoulder.

"I know. It's just a relief that they don't have any idea," Ginny said. "Hermione would hate me."

"No she wouldn't," Harry said, running his hand up and down her arm in a comforting way. "She would listen to you and she would understand that what happened wasn't you fault."

"Do you really believe that?" Ginny asked him.

"Either that or I would make her listen," Harry said half jokingly and Ginny giggled slightly. "Come on. Dry those tears, otherwise mum might get suspicious." Smiling slightly, Ginny grabbed Harry's sleeved and wiped her eyes with it. "I didn't mean on me!" Harry exclaimed, causing Ginny to laugh.

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The rest of the holidays whizzed by in a blaze of fun. Harry and Ginny either went out and built snowmen and had snowball fights, or they stayed indoors snuggled up on the sofa reading a book or playing chess by the fire.

All too soon, in Harry's opinion, the time came for Harry and Ginny to return to Hogwarts. Harry laid awake the night before they were meant to catch the train back to school. The holidays had done

wonders for Ginny. Apart from the letter they had received from Ron, Ginny had been perfectly fine. Of course, Ginny had cried when she read the letter. However, that was just mostly out of relief rather than fear, for which Harry was also relieved.

Harry looked up at the clock to see that it was half past eleven. Knowing that he needed to get up early to be able to catch the train back to school, Harry closed his eyes to go to sleep when there was a sudden knock on the door. Sitting up, Harry frowned before he saw the door opening slowly and Ginny walked into the room wearing her pyjamas and dressing gown.

"Ginny?" Harry asked, shocked and confused.

"I'm sorry," Ginny said. "I just couldn't sleep. I'm going back to Hogwarts tomorrow where someone is forcing me to attack students."

"Forced!" Harry said strongly, getting out of bed. "Forced Ginny. Past tense. As in not going to happen again," he added as he reached Ginny from behind her, wrapped his arms around her waist and gently rested his head on Ginny's shoulders.

"I know," Ginny whispered, turning around so she was facing him. "I believe you. But that doesn't mean I'm not slightly afraid, Harry. Going back to Hogwarts where someone had forced me to attack people. Knowing that they're out there somewhere and could force me to do it again."

"I won't let that happen," Harry told her.

"I know you won't. Or rather I know you want to stop it from happening again as much as you can. But since we don't actually know who was doing it, how can you be so sure that you can protect me?" Ginny asked.

"Because I can," Harry whispered. "All you need to do is believe I can."

"I wish I could," Ginny said, sighing. "And it's got nothing to do with you. But until I know who was making me attack everyone, I will always be afraid that they'll be able to suddenly make me start attacking people again."

"I told you I won't let that happen," Harry said, cupping her cheek. "I won't," Harry added more fiercely. "Plus, you have the ring."

Ginny raised her hand so it rested on Harry's, whose hand was still caressing her cheek. "I'm just afraid that's all. Can you blame me?"

"No," Harry said, shaking his head. "But when we get back to Hogwarts you'll see that I'm right. Nothing will happen."

"I hope you're right," Ginny said as Harry stopped caressing her cheek and Ginny put her hand into his. "I really do."

-oOoOoOoOo-

The next morning, Harry woke up early and got out of bed to change into normal Muggle clothes. He would put his school cloak on over his normal clothes when they got closer to Hogwarts. Dragging his packed trunk down the stairs, he noticed Sirius give Jo a kiss goodbye before Jo flooed to the Ministry. Harry dropped his trunk on the floor and sat down at the table. Mrs Weasley wasted no time in piling food onto his plate to eat and Harry knew better than to moan about it.

A half an hour later, the form of Ginny could slowly be seen coming down the stairs, dragging her own trunk and once she had put it next to Harry's, she sat down, sagging slightly under the tiredness in her usual seat next to Harry.

There wasn't much chatter that morning as they ate breakfast and put the luggage into the boot of the car. The journey to King's Cross was a boring affair and they actually arrived with plenty of time so they didn't have to rush. This was a very rare event indeed.

Once Harry and Ginny had found a compartment just for themselves, they both went back onto the platform to say good-bye.

"Now you two be good this term, okay," Mrs Weasley said, hugging them both. "Have fun and, heaven forbid, do not pull too many pranks. I do not want to get letters home from the headmaster saying that you four have, oh I don't know, turned your Charms teacher into a babbling baboon."



"Babbling baboon," Ginny said, her eyes alight with passion. "We never thought of that. We need to see if we got a potion to do that."

Shaking her head, Mrs Weasley kissed both of them on the cheek and Harry and Ginny went back onto the train. They entered their compartment and Harry laid down on his bench, his head near the window. He expected Ginny to sit down on the opposite seat but to his surprise, Ginny put her hands on his legs and spread them apart. Then she promptly lay in between them and rested her head against Harry's chest.

"Hello," Harry said in a questioning voice.

"Hey," Ginny said, closing her eyes.

"Comfortable?" Harry asked her, smirking.

"Yes," Ginny said, snuggling a bit more into Harry. "You make a nice pillow."

Harry laughed and wrapped his arms around Ginny's waist and pulled her closer into him so there was no daylight between them. "That better?" Harry asked as he took hold of her right hand with his left and laid his right arm along her side.

Ginny lifted her left arm so that it wasn't underneath her or Harry's right arm and then lay still and Harry took that as a yes. The train suddenly started to move forward and Harry watched as the station disappeared from view.

Not too soon after Harry heard the gently breathing of Ginny, telling him that she had falling asleep. Harry ran his thumb against the back of Ginny's hand as he thought about the current situation.

There was no denying that he and Ginny had gotten closer over Christmas. The position they were in now confirmed that. They also had nearly kissed twice and Harry wasn't quite sure why Ginny hadn't confronted him about it. Harry wasn't going to moan. That conversation isn't one he really wanted to have with Ginny just yet.

As the scenery out of the compartment window changed from London town, into small villages and eventually snow covered

countryside, Harry looked at Ginny's ring, which was on the middle finger of her right hand, that he had given her for Christmas.

He never thought that Ginny would have taken to the ring as strongly as she did. Over the past week he had found her playing with it, a smile across her face, numerous of times. Although it was a very unconsciousness thing to do, when he stopped thinking, he found that he too was twirling the ring around on her finger.

It didn't slip by Harry that Ginny was also wearing the ring when she came to him last night. He hadn't mentioned it because he didn't draw attention to it. But it obviously meant that Ginny was sleeping with it on.

Whether it was because of its magical abilities, or just purely out of pleasure of wearing the ring, he didn't know. He was also confused that if she wore the ring when she was asleep, then why did Ginny need to visit him last night? Why didn't she just tap her ring with her wand to be able to speak to him with her mind rather than visiting him in his room?

These questions remained unanswered as the train continue to head North through mountains and passed lakes. Ginny remained asleep in his arms and Harry found himself also getting sleepy as the sun started to set. And within minute, he too was fast asleep.

Harry awoke sometime later to the smell of fresh summer meadow and he opened his eyes to see the auburn red hair of Ginny. Harry looked out of the window and noticed the snow covered mountains that were near Hogwarts. That meant that they couldn't be more than ten minutes from Hogsmeade.

Harry reluctantly started to shake Ginny gently awake so that they could get changed into the school robes. Ginny tried to snuggle deeper into Harry as he shook her, and he laughed and shook her a bit more until Ginny managed to open her eyes.

"What?" Ginny whispered out tiredly.

"We're nearly there," Harry said.

"We're nearly there?" Ginny asked, lifting her head off Harry's chest and looking out of the window.

"Yes," Harry said. "I reckon we'll be there in about ten minutes."

"I missed lunch," Ginny said, rubbing her stomach. "Why didn't you wake me?"

"You weren't the only person asleep," Harry told her and Ginny smiled slightly.

"Oh," Ginny said.

Ginny got up, which allowed Harry to move his legs. After stretching a bit, they settled back down sitting side by side.

When the train finally stopped, they got up and walked onto the platform. It was snowing and Harry wrapped his cloak around him, trying to keep warm. He saw Ginny shivering and looking around he pulled out his wand and silently cast a warming charm on her. After Ginny had noticed its affects, she turned her head questionably at Harry and he just smiled back. She mouthed, "Thank you" before they were forced off the platform and towards the carriages to take them back up to the castle.

Ginny and Harry stayed silent as the carriage took them to the school gates. As they got out, Ginny looked at the castle and stayed quite for a while. "I'm right here Ginny. I won't let anything happen," Harry said, taking her hand. Smiling, Ginny nodded and they walked into the Great Hall.

Neville was walking down the stairs at that time and as soon as he spotted them, he walked straight over to them. "Hey guys, how was your Christmas?" Neville asked them.

"Fine, Neville," Harry said.

"Yeah, it was the best," Ginny agreed and Neville looked down at their intertwined hands. Harry, noticing where he was looking, suddenly let go of Ginny's hand and Ginny looked up at him, slightly disappointed.

"Anything happen while we were away?" Harry asked him. "Apart from the Polyjuice Potion?"

"You mean like an attack?" Neville asked, starting to walk into the Great Hall. "No, no attacks. Did Ron tell you about the interrogation of Malfoy?"

"Yes," Ginny said. "He said Malfoy didn't know anything."

"He didn't. But according to Hermione it wasn't a great loss," Neville said.

"How does she work that one out?" Harry questioned, confused.

"Don't know," Neville said, shrugging. "She said she'll explain after the feast."

After meeting Ron and Hermione at the Gryffindor table, they enjoyed a wonderful feast before Dumbledore dismissed them for bed. Once they got to the common room, Hermione sat down, ready to tell them what she figured out. After a couple of minutes, they had the common room to themselves and Hermione started to speak.

"I guess Ron told you what happened with the Polyjuice Potion. Malfoy isn't the heir of Slytherin which means it's someone else," Hermione said.

"Yeah, and finding out who is going to be a real pain," Ron muttered.

"Not really," Hermione said, and Harry frowned in confusion. "Malfoy let slip something that we didn't know about before."

"And that is?" Neville asked, confused.

"Malfoy said that whoever it was last time was expelled," Hermione said, a gleam in her eye.

"So...?" Harry asked, not quite sure where she was going with this.

"Don't you see?" Hermione asked them. "We can at least find out who opened it last time."

"You can?" Ginny asked.

"Yes. If Malfoy was right and whoever opened it last time was expelled fifty years ago, there will be a record of that expulsion. And whoever it was probably was sent to Azkaban," Hermione explained. "Which means there will be records. I'm sure there are expulsion records in the library. We just need to find out who was expelled fifty years ago for opening the Chamber of Secrets. If we know who it was last time, we can find out who it is this time. They've probably told their kid or someone else they knew how to do it."

"So, what, we just look through the expulsion records?" Ron asked.

"Yes," Hermione said, nodding. "Find out who it was fifty years ago, or who was expelled fifty years ago. We do that and we get one step closer to finding out who is doing it this time."

"That's a brilliant idea," Neville said.

"Yes, I thought so," Hermione said, nodding.

"How long do you reckon it will take us?" Ron asked.

"I don't know. I'm not even sure where exactly to look for them in the library. Although I do know they are in there somewhere," Hermione said.

After a bit more conversation, it was agreed that they would go to the library first thing after class tomorrow to start looking. After that, Hermione, Ron, and Neville said goodnight and left Ginny and Harry on their own.

"Do you think they'll find out?" Ginny asked quietly, and Harry moved from where he was sitting to the sofa Ginny was sitting on and put his arm around her shoulders and Ginny leant against him.

"How could they?" Harry asked. "We know it was someone fifty years ago, but that was fifty years ago. How does that information lead to you?"

"By tracing them. They could find out who of their family is here at Hogwarts. We find out who's making me attack students. They confront them and they tell them it's me," Ginny said.

"To be honest, Ginny, I really think that is unrealistic," Harry said.

"You do?" Ginny asked questionably.

"Yes," Harry said, nodding, "I do."

"You really think so?" Ginny asked.

"The chance them finding out it is you by doing this rather slim to none," Harry told her. "Come on, we have class tomorrow. We need to go to bed," Harry added, getting up.

Ginny stared at him for a minute before whispering, "You're not staying down here?"

"Ginny," Harry said, gently kneeling down to face her and taking her hands in his. "You have this," Harry said, lifting Ginny's right hand so they both could clearly see her ring. "You can contact me with that if you really need me. Nothing is going to happen," he added, running his hand up and down her arm trying to assure her. "I promise."

"Do I really have to?" Ginny whispered.

"Yes," Harry said, getting up.

"Can't we just stay down here for tonight? Just for tonight?" Ginny asked desperately. "Please, just for tonight."

When he looked at Ginny, Harry's heart melted. She looked so vulnerable and scared at that precise moment that all Harry wanted to do was wrap his arms around her and tell her that she was safe. But this would just be hard for Ginny tomorrow night and the night after that. If they got back into the routine of sleeping in the common room with each other, it would be very hard to break Ginny out of it. She had been sleeping on her own perfectly fine all Christmas holidays apart from the first and last night. And no matter how much it hurt Harry to do so, Harry knew that he had to turn Ginny away. For her own good.

"No," Harry said gently and Ginny looked up at him in complete shock. "I'm sleeping in my dorm tonight. You should sleep in yours. You have the ring if anything happens. The whole point of giving you the ring was to allow you to live normally. For us to sleep in our own

dormitories and for you to feel safe. You need to sleep in your dorm tonight, Gin."

"You're not going to stay down here, are you?" Ginny whispered.

"No," Harry said, his heart breaking. "I'm not."

"I understand," Ginny said gently, getting up.

"Do you?" Harry asked, taking her hand. "This isn't about not wanting to be with you, Ginny. It's about getting you back to normal. You were fine during the holidays and that was great. It was like having the old Ginny back and I missed her so much. We need to get you back to that here. And the only way we're going to do this is if we start going back to the normal routine. I'm just trying to help you get better."

"Okay," Ginny said, nodding. "I understand."

"You do?" Harry asked to make sure.

"Yes," Ginny said. "I see your logic, and you're right. I'm just terrified of being on my own."

"You have the ring," Harry said, showing it to her on his finger. "Just tap it with your wand and you'll be able to contact me. Okay?"

"Okay," Ginny said, nodding. "Night."

Harry pulled her into a small hug. "Night," he said as he pulled back from Ginny. He watched as Ginny turned and headed up to her dormitory. He really hoped he had done the right thing.

-oOoOoOoOo-

Harry was awakened at five o'clock in the morning by a rather rude snake by the name of Simon.

"What do you want? I'm sleeping," Harry moaned out at him.

"Well hello, my Christmas was nice, too. Thanks for asking," Simon hissed quietly to him. Harry looked at the clock to see it was five in the morning. Whatever Simon wanted, it could wait.

"Go away, I'm sleeping," Harry said to him, closing his eyes again.

"Fine," Simon hissed back. "I just thought you ought to know that Ginny is awake and down in the common room."

Harry sat up with that statement and saw Simon slither off into the darkness. It was five in the morning yet Ginny was awake. Getting out of bed, he put on his dressing gown and walked out of the dorm.

Ginny sat on the their favourite sofa by the fire. There were bags under her eyes and Harry could tell that Ginny hadn't slept at all. "Ginny," Harry said quietly and her head looked up and he saw tears in her eyes.

"I'm so tired Harry," Ginny whispered. "I just want to go to sleep but I can't. I don't know why but I just can't. I was really scared to go asleep at first, but now I just want to sleep. Why can't I sleep?"

Harry walked over to the sofa and sat down next to her. He draped his arm around Ginny's shoulder pulled her into him. "I'm sorry. I shouldn't have forced you to sleep in your dormitory."

"I don't care anymore," Ginny said. "I just want to sleep. Why can't I sleep? I'm so tired."

"It what happens when you get over tired," Harry explained to her. "You get tired so much that your body becomes irritated from the lack of sleep and your body can't relax, forcing you to stay awake."

"How do I get back to sleep then?" Ginny asked.

"I don't know," Harry said. "But I'm sure there is a sleeping potion in the chest in my dorm."

"I'll go get my key then?" Ginny said, sitting up.

"No," Harry said, shaking his head. "Not now. It's too late. If you were to take it now, you probably won't get up to until this afternoon. We have lessons this morning."

"I'm so tired Harry," Ginny said, closing her eyes. "I just want to rest."



"I know." Harry said, running his hand through her hair, trying to sooth her. "But I'm here now. I'm not going anywhere. At least try to get some sleep now."

"I'll try," Ginny said, closing her eyes and putting her head on Harry's chest. Harry sat there, looking at the silent form of Ginny. Why did he force her to sleep on her own? It was stupid. He was stupid. Now Ginny probably wouldn't be able to pay attention in class today. Although Ginny did sleep most of yesterday on the train ride, that extra rest she got counts for nothing now that Ginny had spent all night awake.

Harry looked down at her silent form and knew that Ginny wasn't asleep, even though she was pretending to be. Her breathing wasn't as calm as it normally was when she was asleep. The question was what were they going to do that evening? Harry's reasons for Ginny to sleep in her own dorm still stood. But if she couldn't sleep then it wouldn't do her any good. His train of thoughts led back to what Ginny had asked for. The sleeping potion. Harry needed to check for certain if they had one, but if they did, Ginny could have a sleeping potion so she could sleep. At least that way she could get some rest. For now, Harry had to settle for just being there for her.

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Come eight that morning Harry rather grudgingly had to shake Ginny awake. She had only properly fallen asleep around six. Two hours of sleep wasn't enough, but she didn't have any more time to sleep some more. Ginny slowly made her way up to her dorm, yawning and Harry felt bad about making Ginny sleep in her dorm that night. A least he made some of it up, although only a small part, early that morning.

When Ginny came back down, she looked as normal as ever. However, Harry knew that was because of her glamour potions that Fred and George re-supplied her with at Christmas. Harry walked over to meet her and took her hand as he led her up to his dormitory.

"Are you okay, Ginny?" Harry asked her.

"No," Ginny mumbled. "I'm so tired I can't concentrate. I almost fell asleep in my dormitory when I went to get changed."

"I have an idea about that," Harry said as they came into the second year boys' dormitory. "Do you have your key?" Harry asked her as he opened up his trunk to the second section and brought out the chest of potions.

Nodding, Ginny open up her bag and took out the key that fit the lock to the chest. Opening it up, Harry looked through the instructions to see what he wanted was there. Smiling as he saw the two potions on the list, he started taking the levels out of the chest. Harry took two potions out on the third level and handed one to Ginny.

"What's this?" Ginny asked eyeing the phial.

"That is going to help you through the day," Harry said. "It's a Pepperup Potion.

"But I don't have a cold," Ginny said.

"I know, but it will give you the energy to get you through the day," Harry told her. "But I am only going to give you this once. You drink it today and that is it. This potion, when used like this, can become very addictive very fast. After the effects of the potion ware out it actually leaves you more tired and sleepy then you were before."

"But how will that help?" Ginny asked. "I just won't be able to sleep tonight and I will have to have it again tomorrow."

"Which is why it's very dangerous to use the potion in this way," Harry told her. "And it is why I am given you this potion," Harry said, handing her the other phial that he got out. "It's a dreamless sleep potion. I know your not having any problems with dreams, but this potion makes you fall into a deep, relaxing sleep. Therefore, you drink the Pepper-Up Potion now to get you through the day and the dreamless sleep potion tonight and tomorrow morning you should be fine. No dreams and completely relaxed."

Ginny nodded in understanding before given Harry a hug. "Thank you," she whispered as she pulled back.

"You're welcome," Harry said, and Ginny downed the Pepperup Potion.

"Feeling better?" Harry asked and Ginny nodded, smiling.

"I can already feel the energy it's given me. It's great and it doesn't taste half bad either," Ginny said, still smiling.

"Which is why it's so addictive," Harry told her. "I'm not giving you anymore. I'm trying to get you better. Not get you hooked on potions."

"I understand," Ginny said.

"Come on. We need to get to breakfast before we're late for class," Harry told her, grabbing his bag and they headed out down to the common room.

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The day past in a blur for Harry. He really couldn't get into any of his schoolwork, but thankfully none of his teachers noticed. When the bell rang to signal the end of classes, Harry, Ron, Hermione and Neville met Ginny in the Great Hall and had tea before Hermione dragged them all to the library to look at expulsion records.

The problem was that they couldn't find any. They searched all evening until it was curfew and they hadn't seen any sign of the records.

"It wouldn't be in the restricted section would it?" Ron asked as the five of them made their way back to the common room.

"No," Hermione said. "The books in the restricted section hold magic that they don't think students should read unless your teacher has given you a special assignment. It's why you need a signed form from a teacher to get a book from there. Records of people being expelled wouldn't be in the restricted section. They're somewhere in the library. We just haven't found them yet."

That evening after Ron, Hermione, and Neville had gone to bed, Harry and Ginny stood near the girls' dormitory stairs as Ginny held the sleeping potion.

"Thank you for given me this Harry," Ginny whispered, yawning

"You need it," Harry said gently.

"Do I have to sleep in my dorm though? Not sleeping in my dorm is what got me into this mess," Ginny told Harry.

"I know Ginny," Harry said, taking her hand and playing with her ring. "But you have this. And Estelle and Simon are about. How did you think I knew to come down to the common room this morning?"

"I know, I know," Ginny said, looking up at Harry with her chocolate brown eyes. "I guess this is goodnight, then."

"I guess so," Harry said, smiling slightly. Ginny smiled back, turned, and started to walk up the stairs. On the fourth step, Ginny stopped, and turned back. Harry was just about to reassure her that it was all right when he noticed that Ginny was still smiling. Ginny came back down the steps and walked right up to Harry. When she was right in front of him, Ginny got on her tiptoes and kissed him on the cheek.

When Ginny pulled back, Harry saw something oddly familiar in her eyes, although Harry couldn't place it. "That was just a thank you, Harry." Ginny said. "For being there when no one else was. For getting me through last term and helping me out with these potions. I wouldn't have gotten through it without you."

"You're welcome," Harry said quietly.

Flashing Harry one last smile, Ginny turned and walked up to her dormitory.

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When Harry awoke the next morning, the first thing he noticed was that it was past daybreak, which meant that it had to be at least past seven. This meant, unless Estelle and Simon weren't doing their jobs right, Ginny had stayed in her dormitory all night. Hopefully asleep, too.

Once Harry had showered and dressed, he walked down to the common room to find it completely empty. Ginny stayed in her

dormitory all night. Harry gave a little sigh of relief and sat down, waiting for Ginny to show.

Ginny didn't turn up until most people had gotten dressed and left for breakfast. Hermione, Ron, and Neville were already down there. Harry was sitting in his usual sofa he shared with Ginny by the fire when he heard a noise coming from the girls' stairs and he turned to see Ginny walking down the stairs, yawning slightly.

"You slept well," Harry commented as she came into the room.

Ginny looked up and spotted Harry, and smiled as she nodded. "How can you tell?"

"Well, first off your body isn't tensed. Your smile actually reaches your eyes. And your eyes aren't dark from being awake most of the night," Harry said and Ginny looked at him in shock. "A glamour charm only covers so much Ginny. It's not just how you look. It's also your body language that tells me how you are."

"You notice all that?" Ginny asked quietly.

"I do," Harry said. "But I'm probably the only one who's looking so you don't have to worry about anyone finding out that way."

Ginny chuckled slightly before sitting down next to Harry. "Just when I think you can't surprise me anymore," Ginny said leaning back and looking at Harry's face.

"You know I have secrets Ginny," Harry told her. "You know that I'm good at magic, which was one of them. But there is more."

"And I'll wait patiently for you to tell me them," Ginny said. "How long until classes start?"

"Not long," Harry told her.

"We don't want to be late then do we?" Ginny said, getting up. "I hear detention is horrible."

"It is," Harry agreed, getting up too as they headed out of the Gryffindor tower.

They walked together along the corridors of Hogwarts, down into the Great Hall and sat down in the two seats the others had saved for them.

"You're cutting it a bit late," Hermione said as the both of them started eating.

"Sorry," Ginny said. "That's my fault. I slept in late."

"We'll you shouldn't have stayed up so late then should you?" Hermione reprimanded her.

"So sorry, mum," Ginny drawled sarcastically. "I'll make sure I'm in bed bright and early at six thirty this evening."

Hermione, Ron, Neville and Harry all turned to her in complete shock. Harry knew Ginny slept well last night, but that was evidence that the old Ginny was at least coming back. That Ginny was coming back to normal. Harry couldn't remember the last time he and Ginny had a sarcastic banter. He had missed it dearly. And Harry was completely sure that Ginny had never been this upfront in front of Hermione.

Hermione looked annoyed and Ron just shook his head. "Harry's obviously rubbing off on you," Ron said.

"And you say that as if it was a bad thing!" Harry exclaimed.

"It doesn't matter really," Hermione said, her voice crisp. "You two had better hurry up. We're heading to class in a minute."

"Ginny's fault," Harry said, baiting the red head. "She was the one who slept in."

"You were the one who waited for me," Ginny retorted. "No one asked you to."

"I don't care whose fault it is!" Hermione hissed, getting up from the table. "You know you two are arguing like an old married couple. I'm off to class. I, for one, at least don't want to be in detention." With that, Hermione walked off towards the second years' first lesson.

"Hasn't she said that before?" Harry asked, looking at Hermione empty seat. "I mean at least she's not going to be late for class because she doesn't want to be in detention."

"I think so," Neville said thinking. "Why?"

"No matter," Harry said. "Just wandering. If she wants to try and have an impact on our school life she could be at least be considerate and think up new lines so it's not boring to listen to the same ones over and over again."

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The classes that day were just as boring as the one before. At least Harry didn't worry about Ginny so much now, though. Harry wasn't even walking with her in between classes now.

That evening at dinner, Hermione announced that they were going to the library to look again for the convict.

"But we searched yesterday and we didn't find anything," Ron groaned.

"That means we need to search some more, Ron. You don't give up on the first try," Hermione said.

Grudgingly, Harry and Ginny followed Hermione and the other two out of the Great Hall and headed towards the corridor to go to the library. All of a sudden, Harry heard his name being shouted out.

"Potter!" Wood called as he came striding over towards them. "Forget what you're just about to go and do. We have Quidditch practise."

"It's the second night back!" Harry moaned out.

"And our game is only five weeks away," Wood retorted. "We need to win and we need to win big. Which means we're going to get all the practise we can get. Now go and get changed."

"Yes, Wood," Harry said, resigned for the worst. "Can Ginny come watch like last time?"

"If she wants," Wood said, nodding. "But be warned, it's cold out there."

Ginny looked relieved that she wouldn't have to spend all evening looking through the library and as Wood walked away, Ginny started to walk towards the staircase.

"What about looking for the person who opened the Chamber of Secrets last time?" Hermione asked.

"You, Ron and Neville can do that," Harry said. "I don't have a choice. I have to go to practise."

"Ginny does," Hermione retorted as she turn to face the red headed girl.

"I know Hermione," Ginny said. "But I hate libraries. I won't be any good to you."

"Fine," Hermione said, "see if I care. Just go."

Ginny took one look at Hermione, turned to look at Harry. Shrugged and started to walk towards the Gryffindor common room. "You coming, Harry?" Ginny called out to him and Harry hurried up to walk with her.

Once they had gone up a few flights of stairs Ginny flashed Harry another smile. "Thanks for saving me from that," Ginny said.

"No problem," Harry told her as they turned right into a shortcut hidden by a tapestry. "No one deserves that kind of torture." And Ginny giggled. "I missed you Ginny. I know you've only had one good nights sleep, but you seem to be a lot better."

"Well, I slept so well last night," Ginny explained. "And I actually feel safe for once. Now, I have this ring. I know that if anything happens all I need to do is tap it and you'll be there for me. All of it is because of you."

"Well I'm glad," Harry said. "Because, like I said, I missed you."

"I missed me, too," Ginny added.



Whilst Ginny waited in the common room, Harry went up and changed into his Quidditch gear. After meeting Ginny back downstairs, they headed out of the castle and down the snow covered lawn towards the six goal posts and the raised seating that made the Quidditch stadium. Before Harry went into the changing rooms, he turned around and cast the warming charm on Ginny so she wouldn't be cold.

"Can you teach me that?" Ginny asked as Harry put his wand away.

"Teach you that spell?" Harry asked her for confirmation.

"Yes," Ginny said, nodding. "You said you would help me out in class. Get me better at magic."

"And so I did," Harry said nodding thinking. "I think we should wait 'till you're better though."

"But I am feeling better," Ginny protested. "You said so yourself. You liked the fact that I'm back to normal."

"I know, Gin," Harry said. "But you're not completely back to normal, are you? You couldn't sleep two nights ago and you had to have a Pepperup Potion to get you through the day and then a dreamless sleep potion to get you through the night."

"So when are you going to start tutoring me?" Ginny asked him.

"How about we wait and see tonight." Harry said. "If you can get through tonight with no potions, and be fine tomorrow morning, then we'll see about me tutoring you."

"And if I can't?" Ginny asked him.

"If you can't, then I will wait until you can before I start to teach you," Harry said. "The most important thing is to get you feeling better before we move onto improving your magic."

"Okay," Ginny agreed.

The practise went rather well for it being in the snow. It had stopped snowing sometime that afternoon and the clouds had started to disperse little by little. Harry caught the snitch four times in a space

of an hour before they practised him finding the snitch. He knew that in the game Gryffindor could rack up some points to catch up Slytherin. Harry waited for thirty minutes with one of his eye constantly waiting for his team to score four hundred before darting down to catch the golden ball.

After practise, Harry and Ginny made their way to the library where the other three still sat searching the library looking for expulsion records. After hours of search and still no sign of the records, Hermione agreed to give up and start the search again tomorrow. Harry wasn't even sure if the expulsion records were actually in the library. They didn't really want to go to Madam Prince in case someone got wind of what they were researching. However, by the weekend they still hadn't found any expulsion records and Hermione decided to change tactic.

"I sent a letter to the Ministry last night asking about a student or teacher sent to Azkaban fifty years ago," Hermione had explained on Saturday morning. "It shouldn't be really to long before we get an answer, but in the mean time we can still look in the library."

"I'm not staying in the library all day," Ginny said to Hermione.

"Fine," Hermione replied irritably. "You can go do whatever you want. But I'm going to try and find out who's attacking people, or at least who was doing it fifty years ago!"

Harry silently agreed with Ginny that staying in the library all weekend wasn't something he wanted to do. However, Hermione was still annoyed and voicing this, Harry thought, wouldn't go down to well. So when Hermione, Neville and Ron headed off to the library, Harry and Ginny headed up the stairs towards the Gryffindor common room.

"You have your wand with you Ginny?" Harry asked her when they reached the seventh floor.

"I always have it with me now," Ginny said, "especially after last term."

Nodding, Harry took her hand and lead her along the corridors until they were next to the tapestry of Barnabas the Barmy.

"Were going to play some Quidditch?" Ginny said happily.

"Maybe later," Harry said as he paced backwards and forwards three times so that a door appeared in the wall. Harry took Ginny's hand and led her through the door and into a bright room.

The room was circular and had its own roaring fire. There was a window in the wall opposite them and underneath that window was a rather big table. There were also two couches by the roaring fire and to the right there was an open space.

"Welcome to your new classroom," Harry said, bowing. Ginny's eyes lit up in enthusiasm.

"You're going to start teaching me magic?" Ginny said happily.

"Well, I did promise to, didn't I?" Harry said, walking towards one of the couches by the fire and sat down. Ginny followed him and sat down in the opposite couch.

"First thing I need to do is work out what you can actually do," Harry told her, starting off and Ginny listened carefully. "So what I want you to do for me is to levitate a feather using the levitation spell you were taught in Charms."

Ginny nodded and pulled out her wand as a feather appeared on the table. Harry got up and took the feather over into the empty space as Ginny followed. Another table appeared as Harry put the feather on the table and stepped back.

"Show me what you can do," Harry told her and Ginny pointed her wand at the feather. Harry immediately noticed that she had tensed up. Probably from expecting to not be good from the start. Harry watched as she did the wand movements perfectly and the feather started to float.

"Good," Harry said, nodding. "Now, try levitating it all the way up to the ceiling."

Ginny started to raise her wand upwards and the feather started to float upwards, too. However, after a couple of feet, the feather stopped and Ginny's face grew irritated. Harry, knowing what the

problem was, stopped Ginny, and the feather fell back down onto the table.

"Okay," Harry said. "That wasn't that bad." Ginny looked at him as if he had gone mad. "Your problems with this spell are quite simple. First off is that when you do the spell, you're expecting it to fail, which doesn't help you in any cause. Secondly, when you get to where it normally stops, you stiffen up. You become suddenly frustrated and irritated and that will only cause the problem to become bigger.

"What I want you to do, Ginny, is close your eyes," Harry said, walking around so that he was now behind her and Ginny closed her eyes. "Now breathe slowly and deeply. Almost like you were trying to sleep, but don't actually fall sleep. I don't want to have to carry you all the way up to the common room." Ginny chuckled slightly before starting to breathe. Harry put his hands on her shoulders and started to massage them.

"Harry?" Ginny asked.

"Just relax," Harry told her. "Ignore me. Just feel me rubbing your shoulders. Breathe slowly and deeply. Do what you would normally do if you were going to go to sleep." Ginny nodded and Harry continued to give her the massage. Not even a couple of minutes later, Ginny's breathing slowed and Harry felt her muscles relax. Soon, Ginny sighed in enjoyment and Harry decided that Ginny had relaxed enough and stopped.

"I know I stopped, but try and keep that relaxed feeling," Harry said, moving his arms down to her waist and wrapped them around her and pulling her close to him. "Relax into my body. Breathe slowly and just relax. Almost like your using me to stand up." Nodding, Ginny smiled and Harry felt her weight come to him. Harry moved a little bit back and Ginny's body moved with his. Harry knew that if he let go, Ginny would fall to the floor.

"Okay," Harry said once he had moved her back the inch that she had slowly falling. "Now I want you to stay relaxed, but try and not fall back with when I move, okay?" Ginny nodded and Harry let go of her waist and slowly stepped back. Ginny stood there, relaxed, eyes closed, and a smile on her face.

"Okay, that's great Ginny," Harry told her. "Now I want you to open your eyes, but try to stay relaxed and calm." Ginny opened her eyes and looked at Harry. He noticed that nothing had changed about Ginny. Her body still relaxed and her breathing still slow.

"That's brilliant," Harry said, nodding. "Now try and keep that feeling, yet try to make an effort when casting your levitation spell."

Ginny closed her eyes, trying to get back the feeling she had and after a couple of seconds, opened her eyes back up to look at the feather. Ginny raised her wand, did the swish and flick movement and said, "Wingardium Leviosa." The feather floated up into the air and Harry watched it get higher. Harry held his breath as it got to the highest point that Ginny had managed to get it. Harry saw Ginny's body stiffened. No, Harry moaned in his head, knowing that Ginny was doing the same thing as last time.

But surprisingly, as if Ginny had read Harry's mind, her body relaxed again. The feather stayed at the same height for a second before slowly starting to get higher. Ginny's face burst into happiness as the feather reached the ceiling.

"Brilliant, Ginny," Harry said. "Now try and bring it back down to the table."

Ginny didn't make any movement to tell Harry that she understood, but the feather started to slowly fall back down and soon it was hovering a few inches above the table. As soon as the feather touched the table Ginny whooped for joy, turned around, and wrapped her arms around Harry's neck and she pulled him into a hug. Burying her face into his neck.

"Thank you," Ginny mumbled as Harry snaked his hands around Ginny's waist.

"You're welcome," Harry whispered.

"You're a great teacher, Harry," Ginny said, pulling back slightly.

"Thanks," Harry replied. "I quite enjoy it, actually."

"What spell am I learning next?" Ginny asked.

"You haven't finished with this one, yet," Harry told her and confusion fell over Ginny's face. "You've done that once, which is great. But you need to do it more than once. So you know it's not just a one off." Ginny nodded in understanding.

"I need to go to the library to check out a book for you," Harry told her. "I want you to stay here and continuing practising levitating that feather. If it gets too easy, ask the room for a book and try to levitate that. I won't be long."

"What's the book?" Ginny asked.

"You'll find out when I bring it back," Harry said. "It's almost like homework. I want you to read it cover to cover."

"You're going to give me homework?" Ginny moaned at him, causing Harry to chuckle.

"I won't make you do essays or anything," Harry told her. "But there might be some books I want you to read when you have the time. Like a half an hour before you go to sleep in bed or during break or lunch whenever you don't have homework to do."

"It will help me with my magic?" Ginny asked.

"Of course," Harry said. "I won't make you read anything you don't need."

"Okay," Ginny said, nodding.

"So I'll be about half an hour," Harry told her. "Just practise that spell and I will explain everything when I get back."

Harry left Ginny with the feather and walked out of the room, turning right and heading to the main staircase. On his way to the library, he couldn't help but smile at the way Ginny was improving. Ginny was sleeping back in her dorm now with no help needed from potions. She was fine with being left on her own. And she was showing promising signs with her magic. She had only been practising for an hour or so, but she already had the levitation spell down.

When Harry reached the library, he kept a look out for Hermione, Ron, or Neville. He didn't really want to run into Hermione at the

moment. Harry walked to the section on the mind and body and started searching. Harry found many books on Occlumency and Legemancy, but he didn't want to teach her that. Not just yet, anyway.

Finally, Harry found what he was looking for. On the shelf was a rather new looking book and on the spine it read. "Meditation for Beginners: Relaxing the Body and Mind." Harry pulled it off the shelf and moved on along looking for anything more interesting. He found a couple of books that caught his eye, but nothing decisive.

Harry was just about to leave when he saw Hermione, Ron and Neville sitting at a table, books surrounding them.

"Maybe Harry and Ginny was right," Neville muttered. "We're not finding anything here."

"That doesn't mean we need to give up," Hermione said. "I almost think that Harry and Ginny don't care anymore."

"Of course they do," Neville argued.

"Maybe they're too wrapped up in their selves to care too much," Hermione muttered.

"What's that meant to mean?" Ron said.

"Oh, Ron open your eyes," Hermione said. "They like each other. We all know that Ginny had feelings for Harry for ages. And it doesn't take rocket science to work out that Harry's fallen for her."

"What's rocket science?" Ron asked.

"Never mind," Hermione said. "But Harry and Ginny are obviously getting closer. Surely you've noticed them starting to act different towards each other."

"Yes," Ron said, "I have. They're acting like they always have done."

"They're acting different then what they did at the start of term. They're closer," Hermione said. "Surely you're not blind to see the difference between the start of term and now."

"No, I'm not," Ron said. "People think I'm thick, but I'm quite smart, thank you."

"I didn't say you were thick," Hermione replied, "but you've noticed their relationship has changed."

"Yes, I have," Ron said, nodding. "They've stopped letting Ginny's feelings get in the way of their friendship and started to act normal again."

"They're not acting like best friends," Hermione said.

"Yes, they are," Ron cut Hermione off. "Look, I've known Harry since I was six and Ginny's my sister. You've known them for how long? A year and a couple of months for Harry and only a few months of knowing Ginny. They've always been this close. Ever since they were five and six years old, Harry and Ginny have been very close friends. The way they're acting now are the same as they were before Ginny developed feelings for Harry. Are you saying that they've had feelings for each other at say eight, nine years old?"

"Of course not," Hermione said. "But..."

"But nothing. All they've done is gone back to the way they were before Ginny had her crush on him," Ron said. "And you weren't around to witness that time. I'm telling you, they're the same as they've always been. They're just not letting Ginny's feelings get in the way now."

"So they've always acted like this?" Hermione asked.

"Yes," Ron said. "There's nothing going between them. They're just the same old Ginny and Harry. Acting like they were before Ginny's crush."

"They held hands before Ginny's crush?" Neville asked and Harry moaned out quietly that Neville had brought that up.

"Held hands?" Ron asked, confused.

"When they arrived back from the Christmas holidays, I was coming down into the Great Hall and I spotted them coming through the front doors. Ginny was huddled close to Harry, probably to keep



warm, and they were holding hands. When I noticed them holding hands Harry let go and Ginny seemed disappointed," Neville said. "I also noticed that Ginny had a ring on her finger. Haven't you guys noticed Ginny's ring?"

"She has a ring?" Ron asked.

"Yes. I think, but it might only be a guess, that Harry gave it to her," Neville said. "I suppose your parents could have. But it was made from pure silver so I didn't think your parents could have afforded it. Sirius might have bought it for her, maybe."

"Sirius wouldn't buy her a ring. Why would he?" Ron said.

"The only other person who could afford to buy her a ring would be Harry and myself," Neville said, "and I didn't get her it."

"Which means Harry gave it to her," Ron said, understanding.

"Why would Harry buy her a solid silver ring if they weren't together?" Hermione said.

"He bought her a necklace for her tenth birthday," Ron said, shrugging. "She wears it all the time. It has a picture of them playing about in the backyard of The Burrow in it. And I mean, IF, they were together, why would they hide it? They have to know we wouldn't mind, right? I mean I know I wouldn't, and I don't think my other brothers would. We've known Harry since he was six. If we can't trust Harry, who is literally family, with Ginny, who can we trust?"

"So you wouldn't mind Harry and Ginny being together?" Hermione asked.

"Not really, no," Ron said, shrugging. "But I'm telling you. I don't think they are. They're just acting like the best friends they are. And I mean, if they were together, I rather much doubt that Ginny would want to keep it a secret. She's had feelings for Harry for over a year. She would want people to know that she's finally managed to catch him."

"I suppose so," Hermione said.

"I'm telling you," Ron said. "They're just acting like they have always done. They just never acted normal around you to know."

"Well, you know them better than us," Hermione said. "If you say so, I guess you're probably right. Although they would make a good couple."

"I would rather not think about Ginny with a boyfriend just yet," Ron said. "She's only eleven."

"But you just said you wouldn't mind if Harry and Ginny were together," Neville said confused.

"I know. I wouldn't mind," Ron said nodding. "But that doesn't mean I want them together now or I'm going to go out of my way to set them up."

Harry walked away from table and headed towards Madam Pince's desk, thinking. He didn't think that the others had noticed his and Ginny's relationship change. Ron was right on one account; he and Ginny had always been close. But they had never been this close before. Not like they were now. They never used to hold hands much. Nor did Harry used to wrap his arms around Ginny's waist to give her a hug as he did now. Thinking about it, Ron was right. He and Ginny were acting and getting a lot closer. He was pleased to also know that Ron wouldn't mind Harry dating Ginny when the time actually came for Harry to reveal his feelings to her.

The question was, when would be the right time to do so? Ginny was sleeping all right now. She seemed to be able to cope on being left alone as well. As evident to the current time, although she was worried when Harry told her that he would be leaving.

The questioned remained was that of the strength of Ginny's feelings for Harry. Did she love him yet? He knew on the train back to The Burrow that he reckoned that Ginny was falling in love. And he definitely knew that nothing had change since then. But the question was that had she fallen completely in love with him or was she still falling? And was she ready to know that Harry loved her. Was she ready to date? Harry didn't know. But he was determined to keep a closer watch on Ginny to find out.

As Harry walked up the main staircase of the castle, Harry heard Ginny's voice call out to him. Looking around, Harry couldn't see her. He heard his voice being called again and Harry realised that Ginny was using the mind ring.

"Ginny?" Harry said in his mind. "What's wrong? Are you okay?"

"I'm fine," Ginny replied. "It's just that you've been gone longer than you said you would."

"I'm sorry," Harry said turning down the sixth floor corridor "It took me longer to find the book than I thought it would. I'm on my way back though and should be there in five minutes. How's your feather doing?"

"I don't understand," Ginny's voice answered. "I did the feather two more times before I moved onto the book. But I don't seem to be able to lift the book as high as the feather. I'm relaxed, though. I did the breathing and I tried to remember what it felt like with you here."

"It's because the book is heavier Ginny," Harry explained, "The heavier the object you're trying to levitate the more magical energy it takes to do so. Which is why you can do the feather easily but struggle with the book. The more you use the spell and the more you try, the more your magic will grow. Keep trying your hardest and eventually you will be powerful enough to levitate it the same as the feather. Your magic is just like a muscle. The more you use it, the more it grows."

"Okay. See you in a second," Ginny said and Harry felt the connection disappear. Harry turned another corner and came to the corridor with the Room of Requirement. Harry walked up to the door in the wall and stepped inside the circular room. Ginny was on the couch, her wand pointing at the heavy book. Harry noticed her breathing was slow and her body relaxed, which meant she wasn't tensed. So the problem was just that she wasn't powerful enough yet to levitate it all the way up.

"That's good, Ginny," Harry said and Ginny noticed Harry and the book fell to the table.

"It's so hard," Ginny muttered.

"You just need your magical reserves to grow Ginny. Once they've started to grow you'll find it easier to do the spells," Harry told her, sitting down next to her and draping his arm around Ginny's shoulder. Harry laid back and Ginny leaned into him so her head now rested on his shoulder.

"I'm so tired," Ginny whispered.

"I know," Harry said. "I think you should stop practising magic for now and read this book I got you. And I'm afraid we can't play Quidditch. You don't have the energy. We'll play Quidditch tomorrow, though, I promise."

"I didn't realise that it took so much energy to cast a spell," Ginny said.

"It doesn't take much physical energy. It takes magical energy. We just need to get your magical reserves bigger," Harry told her. "To do that, you push yourself to the limit of your magical abilities and soon it will start to grow bigger. The knack is pushing yourself so your magic grows, but not push yourself so hard that you're... well..."

"Like this?" Ginny whispered.

"Pretty much so, yes," Harry said. "When you're finding it hard to do, you continue to do it because that's when you're improving your magical abilities. When it starts to drain you of energy that's when you stop. It's hard to realise the difference, but you will. You'll understand after doing it a couple of times the difference between the two."

"Okay," Ginny said. "So I'm reading for the rest of the day?"

"Pretty much," Harry said, nodding. "But you don't have to start right away. You can just relax for now. Start after lunch."

"So what do we do from now until lunch?" Ginny asked.

"Want to go swimming?" Harry said.

Ginny looked up at him confused. "There's bloody snow on the ground and it's freezing."

"Ginny, what room are you in!" Harry said. "This is the Room of Requirement." Harry closed his eyes and there surroundings changed. They were now sitting on a tropical beach. Waves crashing gently on the shore. Behind them were tropical trees and a large heated swimming pool. It was also very warm.

"Wow," Ginny said, looking around and then she eyed the swimming pool.

"It's heated," Harry told her.

"I didn't bring a swimming costume with me," Ginny said with a small, sad smile on her face.

"Which. Room. Are. You. In," Harry said slowly, trying to get Ginny to understand. Ginny eyes suddenly lit up in understanding and she closed her eyes and suddenly a full body swimsuit appeared in front of her. Ginny opened her eyes, saw the swimsuit, and smiled joyfully.

"Last one in is a rotten egg," Ginny said as she grabbed her costume and ran into the changing rooms that suddenly appeared.

"Hey, that's cheating," Harry call after her closing his eyes so that some swimming shorts appeared and rushed into his changing room next to Ginny. After five minutes, both Harry and Ginny was relaxing in the pool.

"Harry," Ginny muttered as she swam on her back slowly.

"Yeah, Gin?" Harry asked, who had his arms on the side so that he wouldn't sink below the surface.

"This is the best lesson I've ever had," Ginny replied. Harry snorted. "All lessons should be like this."

"You know this isn't a lesson right Gin?" Harry told her, chuckling.

"I know," Ginny said, closing her eyes basking in the sun. "But you're still the best teacher I have. I mean, you managed to get me to levitate the feather within an hour."

"Thanks. I actually enjoyed it," Harry said.

"How long 'till lunch?" Ginny asked.

"An hour or so," Harry said. "Why?" Ginny answered by splashing water at Harry and then dashing away from him. "I'll pay you back for that," Harry said, chasing after her.

"You think you can catch me?" Ginny said as she continued to swim away from him.

"Watch me," Harry retorted.

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After lunch, they headed back to the Room of Requirement. Harry had it change back to the room they had before and Ginny sat down in one of the couches and started to read. Now that Ginny was reading about meditation, Harry had rather a lot of time on his hands. He had no essays to write due to the Automated Essay Writer. And even though he had homework to practise certain spells, he didn't really need to practise them. Therefore, whilst Ginny sat in the comfortable sofa by the fire enthralled in her book, Harry was at a loss to what to do. For the past half an hour Harry had just watched the light coming from the fire dance in Ginny's hair. Ginny had looked up at him a couple of times and when she saw him looking she would just send him a smile before continuing reading.

Harry thought about flying, but he knew that would be unfair to Ginny because she wanted to do it, too. Instead, Harry settled for relaxing on the sofa. Harry got his schoolbooks out of his bag, as they were the only books he had with him, and began reading 'The Standard Book of Spells Grade Two.'

"You must be really bored," Ginny said after she had looked up from her book after finishing her latest chapter and saw Harry reading his textbook.

"Beats doing nothing," Harry said, shrugging and looking at her.

"Then why don't you do something?" Ginny said.

"Like what?" Harry snorted.

"We are in the Room of Requirement aren't we?" Ginny said mockingly, repeating what Harry had said to her earlier.

"Oh, ha-ha," Harry drawled and Ginny stuck her tongue out at him. "Very funny."

Ginny shrugged before turning back to her book. "Even though it was a joke, it did have a point, Harry. Do whatever you want. Nothing is stopping you."

Harry thought for a moment and decided that even though he could do anything, he didn't want to do something fun and rub it in Ginny's face when she had to sit and read. So, shrugging, he returned to his schoolbook and started to read again.

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That night Ginny went to bed early to continue to read her book on mediating and to practise a little before she fell asleep. Harry lay awake in his bed wondering what to do. He had fun with Ginny today with the teaching and the swimming. He knew Ginny had fun, too. He had kept a closer eye on her this afternoon to try to figure out just how far her feelings had for him had gotten. He could just ask, but he wasn't sure he wanted Ginny to know how he felt just yet. It was confusing trying to work Ginny out. He had tried to do it when he actually knew for certain that Ginny loved him. He hadn't succeeded then, and he wasn't succeeding now. As Harry lay back in bed to go to sleep, Harry thought that about the unknown world of girls. Even though Harry was married to her, even though they had been friends for so long, Ginny could still confuse the hell out of him. With that thought. He drifted off to sleep.

A;N: Heya, Ginny is finally getting better. Not one hundred but very close. On with the next chapter.... I am also desperately looking for a fan artist to do some scenes from my story. If anyone is interested, give me a bell.

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As the days passed by, Ginny's lessons become more and more frequent. Soon they had set out a timetable where, during the week, Harry and Ginny would join the other three in the library at break and lunchtime, and then once they had tea, the two would trek up to the Room of Requirement for Ginny to have her lesson. On the weekends, they would eat breakfast and then spend the whole morning in the Room of Requirement with Harry teaching Ginny magic. In the afternoons, Ginny would read books that Harry had fetched for her out of the library that Harry thought would help her with her magic.

On Sunday evenings, they would sometimes stop reading and enjoy playing Quidditch together before going back to the Gryffindor Tower to sleep. Hermione had become questionable about where they were going while the others studied in the library. Harry and Ginny just told her that they hung about in the common doing homework or playing chess.

As January turned into February, the Quidditch match Gryffindor had been anticipating arrived that first weekend. The week leading up to it Wood had booked the pitch every night around seven. Wood would have booked it for earlier, but Ravenclaw had booked that time for their practise, so seven o'clock would have to do.

This meant that it cut into the time Harry had to teach Ginny. Therefore, they decided that they would alternate between Ginny staying in the Room of Requirement on her own to continue studying and Ginny coming down to watch the practise every other night.

It was now only two days away from the game, and Harry and Ginny were in the Room of Requirement after having a quick dinner in the Great Hall. Ginny was trying to learn the engorgement charm. Harry watched Ginny relax and point her wand at the apple that was on the table.

"Engorgio," Ginny cried, pointing her wand at the apple. Harry watched on, pleased as the apple started to grow rapidly.

However, Harry started to worry when the apple didn't stop. When Ginny took a step back, Harry knew that Ginny had lost control, and



bringing out his wand, he said, "Finite Incantatem," The apple stop growing and Ginny sighed.

"I'm never going to get this right," Ginny moaned.

"Of course you are," Harry assured her, coming to stand behind her and rest his hand on Ginny's shoulders. "Everyone has problems with spells. You're getting good, Gin. You meditate every night, right?"

"Yes, but how is that helping?" Ginny muttered.

"Well, when you started, you found it very difficult to get enough power in your levitation spell to lift a feather. Now you're putting so much power into your spell it's making the apple grow bigger than you wanted. You just need to understand and control how much magic you put into your spell," Harry told her. "I know it's difficult, and it is actually NEWT level magic..." At that sentence, Ginny turn around and stared wide eyed at Harry. "But I do believe you can do this properly."

"You expect me to do NEWT level stuff?" Ginny hissed out at him.

"Just because it isn't taught until NEWT level doesn't mean it's that hard. The main reason it isn't taught until NEWT level magic is because if you know how to change the power in a spell you can do some real damage with an easy first year spell like the disarming spell," Harry said. "When you feel the magic flowing through you, try and rein it back in slightly. Don't just do the spell and let go. Concentrate all the way through until you get to the end result that you want. Try to will your magic to do that and only what you want it to."

"Okay," Ginny agreed, nodding. Harry shrunk the apple back down to normal size and Ginny tried again. Harry watched as the apple started to grow bigger. When it got to the desired size, Harry watched as the apple still grew. Harry was just about to stop it when Harry noticed that the apple was slowing down in the rate it was growing and not even a couple of seconds later it had stopped growing completely.

"Well done, Ginny!" Harry praised, smiling at her.

"I didn't do it right," Ginny moaned out.

"You're expecting too much of yourself again," Harry told her. "I bet you could do it on the next go, though." And so she did. When Harry resized the apple, he watched as Ginny cast the engorgement charm on the apple and watched it grow to double the size and then stop. When Ginny turned to him, smiling, Harry knew that Ginny had gotten the outcome that she wanted.

"Great job," Harry said, nodding. "Now, just like the other spells you've done, you've done it once but..."

"...I need to do it more than once to know for certain that I can do it accurately," Ginny finished.

"Well," Harry said between laughs. "What do you need me to teach you for? Go on and do it."

Ginny laughed slightly as Harry returned the apple to its original size and let Ginny try to enlarge it again. After four more times of Ginny successfully casting the spell, Harry decided that Ginny had it down and they moved onto the shrinking charm. Ginny didn't end up getting the spell working properly by the end of day and Harry told her that she should work on it tomorrow while he was at practise.

Quidditch practise the next day was a hard affair. With the game just one day away, Wood was working them past the limit. They spent nearly all night training, and as Harry dragged himself back to the Room of Requirement to meet Ginny, Harry had a hard time not falling asleep.

As Harry walked through the door, he saw Ginny sitting lazily reading her book on meditation.

"What happened to practising the spell, Ginny?" Harry asked and Ginny's head shot up in surprise.

"Sorry," Ginny said. "I didn't hear you come in. I've done the spell. I can now enlarge the apple and shrink it back to normal size. I asked the room then for a pineapple as it's bigger and practised on that. It took me a few goes but I can now do that, too." She closed her eyes and a pineapple appeared on the table. Harry watched as Ginny

enlarged the pineapple to almost human size and then shrunk it back down again.

"Wow, Gin," Harry said in surprise. "You're getting really good."

"Thanks," Ginny answered, smiling. "What are you teaching me next?"

"I wouldn't want to spoil the surprise now would I?" Harry replied, flinging himself in the seat next to her.

"If you don't tell me I will tickle you," Ginny said, eyebrows raised.

"Nope, not saying," Harry told her, crossing his arms over his chest in defiance.

"Last chance," Ginny warned, smirking at him.

"Nope," Harry said. Ginny smirked and then pounced. Harry put his plan into action as the room surrounding them changed and the couch they were sitting on grew rapidly. Soon it was as long as three double-decker buses. Ginny sat at her end of the sofa looking at Harry in shock and Harry smiled back. However, that smile didn't last when Ginny's shock turned into a twisted smile. The room around them changed again as it shrank into a very small broom cupboard. The couch disappeared and Harry fell on the cold hard floor and not seconds later Ginny was lying on top of him.

"Two can play at that game Mr Potter," Ginny smirked out from on top of him.

"So I see," Harry said, their faces inches apart. "Nice imagination, Gin. A broom cupboard."

"It was the first very small room I could think of in such a short amount of time," Ginny retorted.

"Sure it was," Harry drawled. "Would you mind getting off of me?"

"Nope, you make a nice cushion. Besides," Ginny said as she put her chin on Harry's chest and looked down into his eyes, "I'm comfortable."

"I'm glad one of us is," Harry drawled back. Harry gazed into her chocolate brown eyes and got lost in their interior. Harry's mind was racing as well as his heart. Was it the right time? Ginny had slept in her room for weeks now and she was completely fine. She hadn't called him on her mind ring or expressed any worry about Hermione and the others finding out it was her who had attacked the students. This was the old Ginny. She was back to normal. The only problem was, did she love him? He still wanted her to fall in love before they started to date. However, as he gazed into her eyes, all rational thought left him. All that he knew was that he was here, alone, with the girl that he loved. And he desperately wanted to kiss her. Harry, running his hand through Ginny's hair, started to slowly lean forwards to capture her lips with his. However, just as he started to lean forward, Ginny leaned back away from Harry. Harry knew Ginny hadn't noticed him starting to close the gap. He was sure that if she did, she wouldn't have pulled back.

Harry watched as the room returned to their normal classroom and Ginny stood up, yawning. "We'd better get back to the common room, Harry," Ginny said tiredly. "Before I really do use you as a pillow." Chuckling, Harry got up and the two of them trudged back to the Gryffindor Tower.

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The next morning, Harry got up very early, as it was the team orders from Wood, unfortunately. Going downstairs into the common room, Harry flopped himself in his and Ginny's usual sofa by the fire. There he waited for ten minutes before he heard footsteps coming from the boys' staircase. Looking around, he saw Wood fully awake coming down them.

"Ah, good Harry. You're up," Wood said after seeing Harry by the fire. "Good work. Once the others come down, we'll be going down to have breakfast. Have you seen the girls?"

"No," Harry yawned.

"We'll they should be awake soon," Wood said. "I'll give them a couple of more minutes."

"Before what?" Harry asked. "It's not like you can go up there and wake them up."

Wood was about to answer when they heard footsteps from the girls' stairs. "Ah, good. Here they come."

Instead, it wasn't the girls. It was Ginny. Harry watched with his eyebrows raised as Ginny made her way over to Harry and sat down next to him. She flashed a smile at him before opening up her book on meditating that she had brought down with her.

"Any reason you're up at this ungodly hour?" Harry asked.

"Yes," Ginny yawned out. "It so happens that two very loud boys down here in the common room woke me up. You wouldn't happen to know who they are would you?"

"We couldn't have woken you up," Harry said. "We were being quite. You wouldn't have heard us in your dorm."

"Wouldn't I Potter?" Ginny asked over her book.

"Never mind now," Wood said. "I'll go see what's keeping the others."

"I know for a fact we didn't wake you up," Harry told her. "What's wrong?"

"Nothing," Ginny said. Harry didn't believe her for one minute.

"Seriously," Ginny added when she saw Harry's look. "Nothing is wrong. I just woke up early and I knew you would be up early, too. Nothing's wrong. I'll go back to bed if you really want."

"Promise?" Harry asked her.

"Yes," Ginny said, smiling. "Do you not think that after everything I've been through these past few months, and the fact that you were there for me that if anything was wrong I would keep it from you?"

"No," Harry said, smiling. "I suppose not. I just care about you, you know."

"And I appreciate that Harry," Ginny said. "I care for you, too. I understand, but trust me when I say there is nothing wrong."

"Okay," Harry answered, nodding. "I trust you."

When the rest of the team finally came down to the common room, Wood made them all head down to the Great Hall to have an early breakfast. Ginny, after deciding that she didn't want to stay in the common room, came with them to have breakfast, too.

They were the first ones into the Great Hall and they ate quietly. When they had finished their breakfast, Wood ordered them down to the Quidditch changing room and Harry left Ginny behind as she helped herself to second helpings.

As the team walked out of the Great Hall, Harry looked up to see rain falling down hard in the magical ceiling. Wood expected them to get four hundred points in that weather. Harry liked Quidditch, but purposely not catching the Snitch when it was pouring outside wasn't something Harry wanted to do.

Once they got soaked from running down to the changing rooms, the team huddled in the changing room for the team talk.

"Right," Wood started. "We've been practising a lot this past couple of weeks, but now is the time to put the plan into action. Harry, remember, we need to catch the Snitch only when we want to do so. We're currently two hundred points behind Slytherin with them playing next week. So, in order for us to catch up to them and still have a chance at the cup, we need to score three hundred to four hundred points. Four hundred would be the better mark so it won't make it so hard on us against Hufflepuff. Which means, Harry, that you need to man mark their Seeker and don't let them have any chance of catching that Snitch.

"You still want us to purposely not catch the Snitch and aim for a long game in this weather?" Angelina asked. "You're mad!"

"You're only just worked that one out?" Harry said.

"We've been training for this for weeks," Wood said, irritated. "We catch the Snitch on our own terms. You got that Harry?"

"Yes Wood," Harry said.

"Good," Wood said.

Soon the time came to march out onto the field. Harry walked out on the soft ground of the pitch, getting soaked from the rain. It was going to be a long game, he could tell. After Wood and the Ravenclaw captain shook hands, the teams mounted their brooms and waited for the whistle. Madam Hooch released the two Bludgers and Harry caught a glimpse of the Golden Snitch before it flew high out of sight. Harry saw Madam Hooch throw the Quaffle up in the air and kicked off when she blew her whistle.

"Hello and welcome to the third Quidditch game of the season. Gryffindor versus Ravenclaw," Lee Jordan announced through the magical enhanced microphone. "Gryffindor must win by at least three hundred points. They certainly have a tall order to accomplish, especially against a good team like Ravenclaw. Gryffindor are currently in possession now with Katie Bell streaking towards the Ravenclaw goal. Fine save from the Keeper. Unlucky Katie.

"Ravenclaw in possession now," Jordan continued. "Bradley passes it to Davis. Davis swerves to avoid a Bludger. To Kirk, he shoots. Ten to zero to Ravenclaw. I guess Gryffindor just needs to warm up a bit first." However, the next two tries for Gryffindor failed to get the outcome they were hoping for.

"Bradley in possession again. Passes to Kirk. He fakes out Wood. Passes it to Davis who puts the Quaffle through the empty goal hoop. Where is the Gryffindor team?" Jordan asked rhetorically. "Twenty to zero to Ravenclaw. Bell in possession now Who passes it to spinet, now to Johnson. Now it's back to Bell. Shoots, and a save from the Ravenclaw Keeper. Bradley in possession to Davis now to Kirk and back to Davis. To Bradley. And a save from Wood.

"To Spinnet. To Johnson. Back to Spinnet. Fakes. Passes it to Bell. Shoots and finally a goal by Gryffindor. Twenty to Ten to Ravenclaw. Come on Gryffindor!" Jordan cried into the microphone.

"If you can't commentate unbiased, Jordan," McGonagall's voice echoed through the microphone, "then you won't commentate at all."

"Sorry Professor," Jordan said. "Spinnet with the Quaffle. To Johnson, to Bell, back to Johnson. To Bell again. To Spinnet. Shoots and another goal by Gryffindor and they're level. Twenty to twenty."

Harry decided to tune Jordan out for a while. This was going to be a tight game. Harry flew around in search of the Snitch. Wood might've wanted him to wait until Gryffindor had scored highly, but that didn't mean that he couldn't spot the Snitch early on. About a half an hour later, Harry still hadn't noticed the Snitch; the only good thing was that Gryffindor had taken the lead and now led ninety points to forty.

"Bell in possession, to Johnson, to Spinet, back to Johnson. She dodges a Bludger and scores. Another goal to Gryffindor. The Gryffindor Chasers are slowly getting back to their best. One hundred to forty," Jordan announced.

"Kirk with the Quaffle now. To Davis. Back to Kirk," Jordan said. However, as Kirk was just about to shoot, a Bludger slammed into him, causing him to drop the Quaffle. "Excellent beating by George Weasley there, or is that Fred? Doesn't matter, Gryffindor in possession. Katie Bell to Johnson, dodges a Bludger. Passes to Spinet. Shoots and scores again. One hundred and ten to forty."

Gryffindor then went onto a scoring spree. Alicia scored the next three goals and then Katie and Angelina both scored twice to make the score one hundred and eighty to forty. Harry flew around the pitch, searching for the Snitch. Harry spotted it by the Ravenclaw goal posts. Turning his broom, Harry dove in the opposite direction. The Ravenclaw Seeker, which Harry noticed was actually Cho Chang, joined him as they plummeted to the ground. Harry pulled up just before he hit the ground and Cho had just enough time to flatten out before she hit the ground. Cho looked at Harry confused and Harry shrugged before flying back high into the air.

"That was an excellent Wronski Feint from Potter," Jordan announced to the crowd. "There's no denying it. This boy has got bags of talent. You will definitely see him in the international scene soon, mark my words."

"Jordan! The game!" Professor McGonagall's voice rang out.

"Right Professor. Gryffindor leading two hundred to fifty," Jordan said, telling everyone the score. "Bell in possession again. Passes to Spinet, she ducks a Bludger. Passes to Johnson. Shoots and another goal by Gryffindor."



"Kirk in possession now, passes to Davis. Ducks a Bludger. Shoots and a save from Wood. Wood passes to Katie, To Angelina, and she gets hit from behind from a Bludger, Kirk in possession again, to Davis, passes to Bradley. Shoots and a goal to Ravenclaw. Two hundred and ten to sixty."

Every time Ravenclaw scored, Gryffindor scored twice more. So, soon enough Gryffindor had the lead two hundred and seventy to ninety. Harry flew to the other end of the pitch desperately looking for the Snitch. After his third circulation of the pitch, Harry spotted the Snitch high up in the sky. Harry darted upwards and raced the Snitch up into the clouds. Higher and higher Harry went, getting more and more soaked. All of a sudden, Harry shot through the remaining cloud and he was no longer getting wet. He was above the clouds. Harry looked around, awed at the view. He had to bring Ginny up there sometime.

Harry looked around for the Snitch, but didn't spot it. He could no longer hear anything from the Quidditch pitch that was miles below him. Harry cautiously flew around, but still couldn't see the Snitch. Getting ready to go through the clouds again, he took a deep breath and dove down. Harry let his breath out when he was below the clouds, rain beating down on him.

As he flew back lower, Harry spotted the Snitch again and dove after it. Sensing that Harry was on its tail, the Snitch started to fly downwards with Harry zooming after it. The ground started to get nearer and nearer to the ground. Harry heard screams from the crowd as the ground came racing up to him. The Snitch darted out horizontally an inch from the ground and Harry hurriedly straightened his Nimbus out.

However, in the hurry to level out his broomstick, Harry over did it, and the tail of his broomstick touched and dug into the ground. The broomstick suddenly bucked and Harry flew off. If luck would have it, if you called being bucked off your own broomstick after just coming from over a six thousand foot dive, Harry flew straight along the path of the Snitch. Harry managed to claw his fingers around the tiny golden ball before he slammed into the ground. Harry tumbled over repeatedly until he reached the edge of the pitch and smashed into the bottom of the stands. Harry managed to see his Gryffindor

teammates rushing towards him on their brooms before unconsciousness over took him.

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When Harry came back 'round, he felt the rain pelting down onto his face. He blinked and a blurry world came into focus. His glasses must have fallen off. Harry tried to remember why he was on the ground. He remembered flying above the clouds searching for the Snitch, remembered diving down after the Snitch to try to catch it and remembered the ground rushing towards him and him trying to straighten out to avoid almost certain death. He remembered the broom touching the ground, bucking him off, and managing to catch the Snitch whilst being thrown off his broom, then nothing. He didn't remember hitting the ground nor did he remember crashing into the stands to where he now lay. He didn't know what happened to his broom or his glasses. Harry heard movement around him and suddenly his glasses were being put on and Ginny's worried anxious face came into focus.

"Ginny?" Harry asked wearily. Ginny sighed and Harry saw tears forming in her eyes.

"You're okay?" Ginny questioned, her voice quivering in fear.

"I think so," Harry said, trying to sit up.

"No Harry," Ginny said, gently putting a hand on Harry's chest forcing him to stay. "We don't know badly you're injured. Stay where you are."

"I'm fine," Harry muttered, but Ginny's hand was forcing him to stay down so he relented and gave up.

"That was some catch Harry," Woods voice came to him and Harry looked up to see him and the whole Gryffindor team surrounding him. He also saw Hermione, Ron, Neville, Percy and Dumbledore watching him carefully.

"How many did we win by?" Harry asked.

"How many points did you win by?" Ginny said hysterically. "Harry, you're lucky you're not dead after that fall. It doesn't matter how many points you won by!"

"The final score was four hundred and forty to one hundred," Wood told him. "Which is excellent for the Quidditch cup. We're in the lead by two hundred and forty points. Another big win against Hufflepuff and that cup is ours."

"Who cares about bloody Quidditch!" Ginny shouted at Wood and he looked gob smacked at Ginny. "It's just a game. Nothing you should risk your life over."

"But I'm fine Ginny," Harry told her.

"What do you remember?" Dumbledore asked him.

"Well, I remember being thrown off my broom," Harry said, "and catching the Snitch."

"Do you remember hitting the ground?" Hermione asked.

"No, but I probably got knocked out when I hit the ground," Harry said.

"No Harry," Angelina said worriedly. "You were conscious after you hit stands. Even though it was only for a couple of seconds."

"He probably has concussion then," Dumbledore said. "You were out for a good five minutes, Harry. Professor McGonagall has gone to fetch Madam Pomfrey and they should be here any minute."

"I'm not going to the Hospital Wing," Harry growled out.

"Harry please," Ginny said. "If you have a concussion then it isn't a bad idea if Madam Pomfrey checks you over."

"Fine," Harry muttered, "but I am not staying in the Hospital Wing."

Ten minutes later, Professor McGonagall and Madam Pomfrey marched out onto the pitch and Madam Pomfrey started to cast diagnostic spells on him. After ten minutes, Madam Pomfrey stopped.

"I am very surprised," Madam Pomfrey stated. "I suspected him to have at least a broken bone, and how Minerva described his fall I wouldn't have been surprised if he had broken his spine or neck."

"He hasn't though?" Ginny asked, scared.

"No," Madam Pomfrey said. "No broken bones or injuries. He might have concussion, though. What do you remember Mr Potter?"

"Everything until I hit the ground after I caught the Snitch," Harry told her truthfully. "I don't actually remember hitting the ground."

"Then you definitely have concussion,." Madam Pomfrey told him. "I would normally suggest a nights stay in the Hospital Wing, but with you Potter I would suspect you to sneak out like last time." Hermione, Ron and Neville looked at him, confused after hearing that last sentence.

"If Ms Weasley makes sure that you rest and don't do anything strenuous then I could probably let you back to the Gryffindor Tower. You're not to do any homework though, not after your head injury. It's rest for you. Don't strain yourself. Ms Weasley, you'll make sure he follows these rules?" Madam Pomfrey asked Ginny.

"Of course," Ginny said, nodding and he knew that Ginny meant it. Ginny helped Harry to his feet and they walked back to the changing rooms.

"What did Madam Pomfrey mean by sneaking out like last time?" Hermione asked.

Harry felt Ginny stiffen up and Harry racked his brains to think of something up. "I snuck out in the morning to come find you guys. Remember when I came to you in the library the next day?"

"You had a massive head injury!" Hermione hissed out. "How can you be so dumb to sneak out of the hospital? What if something happened to you?"

"It didn't, though," Harry reminded her.

"That doesn't mean it couldn't have," Hermione countered. "I can't believe Madam Pomfrey is not making you go to the Hospital Wing this time, either. Ginny you'd better make sure he rests."

"Don't worry," Ginny said. "He doesn't want to get on the wrong side of me, do you, Harry?"

"No," Harry said hurriedly.

Once they trekked all their way up to the Gryffindor common room, Ginny let Harry go with Ron and Neville up to their dorm and bathroom for Harry to wash and get changed. Ginny also headed to her dorm to wash and get changed after kneeling down in the mud and half-carrying Harry up to the common room.

Once they were all back down in the common room, Hermione told Ron and Neville that they should continue searching for the convict and asked Ginny if she was okay with looking after Harry. Ginny said she was and the three others headed out of the common room. Neville was the last one to leave, and just before he left he turned back to speak to the two of them quickly

"Now Ginny," Neville said. "Don't enjoy playing nurse maid to Harry too much." This caused Ginny to blush as she glared at Neville, who was smirking joyfully. He turned to go, but stopped and turned back to them one last time. "And Harry. Don't enjoy it too much, either." Neville left hastily after that before either Harry or Ginny could curse Neville.

"I can't believe he said that," Ginny muttered.

"Yeah," Harry agreed. "I think payback is in order soon."

"You're not doing anything that will strain you too much, Harry," Ginny scolded him.

"You really like playing nurse maid don't you?" Harry smirked, causing Ginny to hit him playfully.

"Now, is that really looking after me?" Harry asked her and Ginny laughed. "Are you going to feed me grapes?"

"Shut it you," Ginny retorted, blushing more.

"You know," Harry said questionably, "you haven't blushed in ages."

"I know," Ginny said as the blush slowly started to ebb away. "And if you make another retort that makes me blush again, you're dead."

"But you're so cute when you blush," Harry teased her.

"Cute?" Ginny asked, questioning his choice of words. "You think I'm cute?"

"When you blush," Harry said, sticking his tongue out at her.

Ginny hit him again, laughing while she was doing it. "Well, I'm not blushing for you again, Potter, so savour the moment."

"I am," Harry said, getting up. "Come on, let's go to the Room of Requirement."

"You need to rest," Ginny said to him seriously.

"And I'll rest in the Room of Requirement," Harry said, rolling his eyes. "It's not like I can't walk, Ginny. Or don't you want another lesson."

"Fine," Ginny said. "But I'm making sure you don't over do it, Potter."

"Whatever you say, Weasley."

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Once they reached the Room of Requirement, Harry walked backward and forward before the door appeared that led them into their usual room for Ginny's lessons. Harry, rather than leading her other to the sofa by the fire, he lead her to the open space to the right.

"So, what are you going to teach me, Professor?" Ginny joked out.

"I like the sound of that," Harry said thoughtfully. "Whenever I'm teaching you here, you have to call me Professor Potter."

"The day I call you Professor Potter, Harry, is the day I let one of my brothers or you win an argument," Ginny said defiantly.

"Fine, no more lessons," Harry said, starting to walk back to the sofa.

"Teach me Potter!" Ginny demanded, grabbing his arm to stop him from moving.

"Or what Weasley?" Harry said.

"I'm going to fail my exams and not be here next year," Ginny said.

"Oh the joy," Harry replied sarcastically. "I get to be free. Fine, I'll teach you. On one condition, though."

"What?" Ginny said, eyeing him suspiciously.

"You call me Professor Potter," Harry said, smirking. This earned him another hit from Ginny.

"Just start the bloody lesson, Potter," Ginny told him.

"Professor," Harry remarked. However, after the glare Ginny sent him, Harry decided to start the lesson. "Okay, so I think I'm going to start teaching you how to defend yourself, although you don't need too much of it because you already have the Bat-Bogey Hex. It's actually..."

"I don't," Ginny whispered, causing Harry to stop in mid-sentence.

"What?" Harry asked, confused.

"I don't have the Bat-Bogey Hex," Ginny said more clearly this time.

"Of course you do," Harry said. "Why wouldn't you have it?"

"I'm not powerful enough," Ginny whispered.

"Bull," Harry said, shocking Ginny. "You've been able to do the Bat-Bogey Hex since you were eight."

"I know," Ginny muttered

"You really can't do the Bat-Bogey Hex?" Harry asked, confused. Ginny shook her head. "You did it on the train ride here," Harry said

"I know," Ginny said sadly. "Which is why I'm confused as to why I can't now."

"When was the last time you tried it?" Harry asked her.

"Just after Colin," Ginny muttered.

"You were distressed then, Ginny," Harry told her. "Did you try again after you calmed down a bit?"

"No," Ginny said. "But I've been trying since September. I can't do it, Harry. When I found it difficult to do the spells in class, I tried the Bat-Bogey Hex. I was confused because I couldn't do the spells in class. So I tried the hex and I found I couldn't do it."

"Hmm, and you haven't tried since Colin?" Harry asked. Ginny shook her head. "Try again now. Go on, just try it again now for me."

"It won't work," Ginny muttered.

"Just humour me," Harry said.

Ginny raised her wand and said, "Bates Mocos." A tiny, dimly lit yellow light flashed out of Ginny's wand and disappeared in an instant. Ginny sighed and turned to look at Harry.

"Okay," Harry said, folding his arms across his chest. "Now actually try. Do what I've taught you for the past month. Do it properly, take your time. And TRY. Do not expect to fail."

"It won't work," Ginny whispered.

"That's because you're not caring and not concentrating," Harry told her. "If you're going to be like this, then I'm just wasting my time."

"No-one asked you teach me," Ginny said, copying Harry's stance of folding her arms against her chest.



"Actually, you did," Harry said. "Not two minutes ago. You want me to teach you, that's fine Ginny. I love teaching you, but actually try, please, Ginny. Otherwise, you're not going get any better."

"But I am trying," Ginny moaned out.

"When you did that spell," Harry said to her. "Did you expect to cast it or expect to fail?" Ginny didn't answer, but just hung her head. "That what I thought. Now try this time. Don't expect to succeed easily; you need to put some effort into it. But don't expect to fail."

"I'm sorry," Ginny mumbled out. "I'm just worried about you. That's all. You could have gotten seriously hurt this morning."

Sighing, Harry walked up behind her and wrapped his arms around her and rested his head on top of Ginny's. "I'm okay," Harry told her gently. "Don't worry about me, Ginny. A Quidditch injury isn't going to stop little old me."

"You don't get it," Ginny whispered. "When I saw you hit the stands, I thought...I thought you might be dead. After that dive and the way you crashed into the stands..." Harry felt that a shudder from Ginny and realised that Ginny was crying. "...I thought I had lost you," she added in a whisper.

"I'm right here, Ginny," Harry said, kissing the top of her head gently. "I won't leave you. You mean too much to me." Ginny turned and buried her face into Harry's neck as she cried silently. Harry led her over to the sofa and sat down pulling Ginny down onto his lap. There he held her as she held onto his neck, crying silently.

"You know I won't leave you," Harry said to her. "You've got nothing to be afraid of."

"I can't help it," Ginny whispered. "Not when I feel like this about you."

"Like what Ginny?" Harry asked.

"It doesn't matter," Ginny whispered. "It's not important."

"It obviously is if it gets you worked up like this," Harry told her gently.

"Please Harry," Ginny whispered. "Just leave it."

"Only if you really mean it," Harry said to her. "But remember, you can always talk to me about anything. I'm here for you."

"I know," Ginny said, sniffing slightly.

"Come on, Gin. Wipe those tears," Harry said running his hand up and down her arm slowly, trying to comfort her. "You've got your lesson to get back to."

"I'm not really in the mood at the moment," Ginny said, wiping her eyes with her sleeve.

"Okay," Harry said, understanding. "So what do you want to do?"

"Can we just stay here?" Ginny asked, reburying her head into Harry's neck. "Like this."

"Sure," Harry agreed, leaning his head against Ginny's. "No Problem."

And that's where they stayed for the rest of the afternoon. Holding each other close, enjoying each other's company, being relaxed and carefree. Just the two of them. Together.

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Harry and Ginny walked down to dinner that night holding each other close. Harry had his arm around Ginny's shoulders and Ginny lent slightly against him. Ginny had started to brighten up after she had finished crying. They didn't do anymore to her lessons. They had just talked about what ever came up. Quidditch and pranks were the main topic of discussion.

When they reached the Entrance Hall, Harry and Ginny consciously pulled apart from one another, although neither really wanted too. They just didn't want Hermione to badger on at them with questions they didn't really want to answer. Neither of them was blind, though. They both knew things were changing between them, even if they hadn't talk about it yet.

Just before they went through the doors, they heard a shout behind them and they turned to see the blond Slytherin they both hated with a passion strutting up to both of them. Crabbe and Goyle flanking either side.

"So how's Potter and his little Weaslette, then," Malfoy sneered.

"Shove of Malfoy," Ginny said. "We're not in the mood for your petty games."

"Since when did you develop an attitude, Weaslette?" Malfoy asked. "You'd better watch your mouth before you find yourself with a nasty curse."

"You harm her and you're dead," Harry told Malfoy.

"Always playing the hero, Potter. Trying to protect your girlfriend," Malfoy sneered. "I'm not scared of you. Haven't been for ages. You're all talk and no action. You're rubbish at everything. Rubbish at magic and rubbish at Quidditch."

"No he's not," Ginny argued heatedly.

"Leave him, Ginny," Harry said, putting a hand on her arm. "He's just trying to wind us up because Gryffindor has taken the lead in the Quidditch cup."

"Oh yes," Malfoy said. "Gryffindor in the lead of the Quidditch cup. I'm trembling in fear. You've played one more game than us, Potter. We'll take it back next weekend."

"I have no doubt you will," Harry said, turning to go. "But in no way are Slytherin going to win the cup. Not with you as Seeker, anyway."

"I'm a much better Seeker than you, Potter," Malfoy sneered.

"I very much doubt that," Ginny said.

"Who caught the Snitch in the first game of the season?" Draco drawled.

"Only because Harry had a rogue Bludger after him trying to take his head off," Ginny said. "Harry could beat you easily in a fair match. He's a much better flyer than you."

"What ever you say Weaslette," Malfoy said in a non-carrying voice and walked into the Great Hall.

"I hate him," Ginny whispered to Harry.

"So do I," Harry said, nodding. "But you gave me an idea."

"I did?" Ginny asked. "What?"

"That's for me to know and for you to find out later," Harry said, taking Ginny's hand unconsciously and started to pull her into the direction of the Great Hall. Ginny fell into step and together they walked into the Great Hall. Harry suddenly realised that they were holding hands so he let go, hoping no one had noticed. He heard Ginny sigh and was about to ask what was wrong, but Ginny started to walk towards the Gryffindor table so he filed away that question for later.

When they reached their table, they sat down next to Neville and opposite Hermione and Ron. "How are you feeling?" Hermione asked Harry.

"Fine," Harry said. "Tired from the game, but fine. I'm glad I don't need to do homework this weekend."

"Yeah, lucky you," Ron muttered.

"That was a close call Harry," Hermione said. "And where have you two been? You weren't in the common room when we dropped of some books we got out of the library."

"We just walked around the castle. Searching for hidden passage ways and stuff," Ginny said.

"I take it you didn't find the Marauders Map at Christmas," Neville commented.

"No," Harry said, shaking his head. Now that Neville had asked, Harry did wonder how Remus was doing with the map. They had

been here for a month now. Harry took it that it was harder to change Ginny's name than he first thought."

The answer to where the map was to come halfway through dinner when two owls came swooping down to the Gryffindor table. One owl dropped a letter in front of Hermione and the other dropped a piece of blank parchment and a letter for Harry. He instantly knew this was the map. Smiling, he ripped open the letter and read.

Dear Harry.

This is the map sorted out for you. I'm sorry it took so long. It was hard trying to get it to say for just Ginny's name. However, her name now says Ginny Weasley on the map. I have also added in some instructions on the map on to how to modify it, in case you ever want Ginny's name to go back to Potter. There are also instructions on how to add rooms and passageways to the map in case you find some that we old marauders didn't find in our time at Hogwarts. Sirius said that's very unlikely, but I believe you will find some more rooms. To get to the instructions just tap the parchment with your wand and say 'I solemnly swear I want to add to the mischief.' Instructions will then appear on how to add rooms and change people's names if you want. I hope this is okay for you and maybe one day you will trust me in on the secret of why Ginny's name was Potter.

Your favourite Uncle, (because Sirius is too childish to be one.)

Remus

Harry smiled widely as he pocketed the letter.

"Why did someone send you a bit of old parchment?" Ron asked, turning the Marauders Map over to see if something was written on the other side.

"A bit of old parchment!" Fred said, startling the others as he sat down next to them

"That isn't just a bit of old parchment, Ron," George said, sitting down at the table as well.

Ginny eyed the two of them and then looked at the parchment and her eyes widened in understanding. "The Marauders Map!" Ginny said excitedly.

"Sirius, Remus, and Jo managed to find it while they were doing some cleaning of Potter Manor," Harry told her. "This will come in excellent use. Couldn't come at a more perfect timing."

"Oh great," Hermione muttered. "We know what that means."

"What?" Harry asked innocently.

"You're going to pull a prank," Hermione stated. Ginny, Fred and George looked at Harry expectantly.

"Maybe," Harry said slowly, but that was enough for the other three. Fred and George hissed out yes while Ginny secretly squeezed Harry's hand affectionately under the table.

"I was so hoping you'd say that," Ginny said, smiling her beautiful smile that Harry loved.

"We'd better not eat any food tomorrow morning, then," Neville said.

"Don't worry," Harry said, as Ron looked horrified at the idea of not eating breakfast, "it's not going to be the whole school, nor is it going to be any of you."

"Who then?" Fred asked.

"Just wait and you'll see," Harry said.

-oOoOoOoOo-

After dinner Harry, Ginny, Fred and George headed up to the second year boys' dormitory in the Gryffindor Tower. Harry brought out his chest from the second section of his trunk while Ginny took off the key that she hung around her neck with a piece of string.

"So what's the plan?" Fred said.

"Who are we pranking?" George questioned in excitement.

"Please let it be Malfoy," Ginny said.

"Can we do Snape and Lockhart as well?" Fred asked.

"We are pranking two people," Harry told them. "Malfoy and myself."

"Yourself?" Fred asked confused.

"We understand Malfoy," George said. "But why yourself?"

"Simple reasons," Harry said as he put back all trays of potions he got out back into the chest and then gave Ginny the two bottles of potion he wanted out of the chest. "One in mine and one in Malfoy's drink," Harry said to her.

Ginny smirked. "This is going to be fun," she said. "Can we prank other people, too?"

"Not tomorrow," Harry told her, "but soon."

"Can't you prank me with this, too." Ginny moaned out. "Please!"

"It's Sunday tomorrow. I might be able to get another two phials for us to use while the others are in the library." Harry told her and Ginny flashed a grateful smile at him.

"Can someone explain to us what that chest is?" Fred asked.

"And why Ginny wants to drink a potion out of it?" George added.

Harry and Ginny smirked at one another and then explained what the potion did.

-oOoOoOoOo-

Early the next morning Harry and Ginny sat in the empty common room together alone, eyeing the Marauder's Map that lay out on the table in front of them. Fred and George were in the kitchen talking to a house elf, trying to persuade them to put the potion in the two drinks.

"Do you think they will be able to get it in the drinks?" Ginny asked.

"They managed to get some potions in the drinks and food at the beginning of the year." Harry reminded her. "I wish they told us how they did it." Harry added as he saw Fred and George leave the kitchens and start to head back to the common room to meet him and Ginny.

"Persuade the house elf you mean?" Ginny asked. "I don't know, but when it comes to Fred and George it could be anything."

Harry and Ginny tracked Fred and George back along the corridors with the map. Harry smiled when he looked at the Gryffindor common room and saw the name Ginny Weasley instead of Ginny Potter. He preferred her proper name, but she wasn't quite ready to know that secret yet and he had desperately wanted to share the map with her.

When Fred and George got back to the common room, other people in the tower were starting to move about. It wasn't long before Hermione, Ron and Neville had joined them. While they headed down to breakfast, Ron and Neville pounded them with questions about what prank they had pulled.

"You'll see," was the only reply they ever got.

When the seven of them reached the Great Hall, Fred and George lead them to their usual seats and Harry sat down where they indicated him too. Ginny sat down next to him whilst Fred and George sat down opposite.

Harry started eating while casting a discreet eye over the Slytherin table. Not five minutes later Malfoy strutted in and sat down, to the pleasure of Harry, Ginny, Fred and George, in his usual seat. Harry watched carefully Malfoy carefully as he ate. He hadn't taken a drink yet, which annoyed Harry to no end.

"Come on you git," Ginny whispered next to him. "Bloody drink it."

"One would think you are enjoying this way too much Ginny," Harry whispered.

"One would be correct," Ginny whispered. "I want him humiliated. He's an idiot and a bully and should get his comeuppance."



"You know I could lose?" Harry said to her.

"Yeah right, Harry." Ginny said in a disbelieving tone. "Yes! He's drunk it."

Harry whipped around to see Malfoy put his goblet down when it was empty, wipe his mouth with his sleeve and then go back to his food. Harry hastily grabbed his drink and gulped down the whole lot.

"Thirsty?" Hermione asked.

"No," Harry said, smiling. "Just needed to drink that quickly." Harry went to eat another piece of bacon, but he didn't feel hungry anymore. Twenty seconds later, Harry started to feel bloated. Puffing out some air, he rubbed his stomach.

"You okay?" Hermione asked.

"Fine," Harry said as he started to feel dizzy and light headed. "This is meant to happen."

"I'm jealous," Ginny said, smirking.

"I told you, you can have some later," Harry said to her as Harry closed his eyes. This felt really, really, strange.

"WHAT'S GOING ON?" Harry heard Malfoy shout out and Harry opened his eyes to see him starting to float up in the air. Harry smirked as he felt him too start to rise. Ginny smiled encouragingly at him before he left the table and her behind as he floated up into the air.

"POTTER!" Malfoy shouted. "WHAT'S GOING ON?"

"WHAT MAKES YOU THINK I KNOW!" Harry shouted back, acting just as confused as Malfoy was. Once Harry and Malfoy had stopped rising, there was a bang and a floating red ribbon appeared. The ribbon started to move and form words like last time.

'It has come to our attention that there is currently a question mark over who is the best Seeker between Mr Potter and Mr Malfoy.'

'Therefore, The Ghost of The Marauders would like to challenge Mr Potter and Mr Malfoy to a flying race. The person to catch the Snitch wins.'

'Wild-Fire will release the Golden Snitch on our say. You will then wait before we give you the all clear to go chase the Snitch.'

'To be able to move about and fly, you use the same motions you would if you were swimming.'

'Wildfire, would you please release the Snitch.'

Harry watched as Ginny pulled out the Snitch from her pocket and muttered the spell to start it off before letting it go. Harry quickly cast a wandless invisible spell on the Snitch so no one could see that Ginny had released it. After ten seconds, Harry cancelled the spell and continued with the ribbon.

'The Snitch has been released. You will both start searching for it after we have finished the count down.'

"What if we don't want to do this?" Malfoy asked.

'Then everyone will know you're too chicken to go up against Harry fairly without a rogue Bludger chasing after him and we announce Harry the winner.'

'You start in ten.'

'Nine'

'Eight'

'Seven'

'Six'

'Five'

'Four'

'Three'

'Two'

'One'

'GO!'

Harry watched as Malfoy gingerly tried to move about in the air. Harry copied the same motions as him to start, but after ten seconds, he thought to himself to hell with it, and started to fly normally. If anyone asked, he would just say that he was an excellent swimmer. Malfoy watched Harry fly about searching for the Snitch and shrugged before he too started to fly about. They both searched for the Snitch for five minutes.

'It couldn't be that hard to find it.' Harry thought to himself as he flew about, the Gryffindor table cheering him on and the Slytherins cheering on Malfoy. 'This room is smaller than the Quidditch Pitch.'

It took Harry another ten minutes to find it before he dove down to where it had hidden by the Hufflepuff table. The Hufflepuff's had to duck as Harry swooped down on them, outstretching his hand, trying to catch the Snitch.

Harry was soon joined by Malfoy, neck and neck they flew after the Snitch. As it got to the end of the Ravenclaw table, the Snitch shot up flying towards the ceiling and Harry and Malfoy carefully started to fly upwards.

They had to dodge beams as they got higher and Harry noticed the open gap where the owls came in. The Snitch was heading straight for it. If it went through that then the Snitch would be lost. On the other hand, he could mutter the spell to stop the Snitch from working. However, that would reveal that it was Harry's Snitch and get him, as well as Ginny, Fred and George into serious trouble. Harry tried to close the gap down before it reached the gap. All of a sudden, to the shock of Harry and Malfoy the, Snitch zoomed downwards and Harry and Malfoy had to flip and dive downward fast. The Snitch was heading straight for the Gryffindor table. Then the Snitch darted upwards a little and zoomed of again around the hall.

Harry started to close in on the Snitch with Malfoy on its tail. The Snitch was heading towards the head table and Harry tried to stretch out his arm to grasp his fingers around the Snitch.

Both Malfoy and himself were getting closer to the Snitch. Harry and Malfoy's elbows were knocking against each other's as they both reached out for the golden ball. They were getting closer and closer to the staff table.

Harry tried to stretch out a bit more and Harry felt the Snitch's wings flap against his fingers. Harry started to kick his legs more ferociously as he came closer to the Snitch and his hand closed around the golden ball just as Malfoy made a grab for it.

Harry heard the Gryffindor table roar with excitement, but Harry was concentrating far too much on the staff table getting rapidly closer to him. Both Harry and Malfoy had to soar upward as they both missed the table by inches, causing Snape, McGonagall and Professor Dumbledore to duck.

As Harry and Malfoy relaxed after flying for twenty minutes in the air, another bang was heard and the red ribbon was back.

'We would like to thank Mr Potter and Mr Malfoy for showing true sportsmanship and taking part in this prank.'

'I, Prince of Mischief, hereby declare Mr Harry James Potter the winner and the bragging rights of being the best Seeker in the school.'

'We would once again like to thank Mr Potter and Mr Malfoy and hope they enjoy the rest of their weekend. Good Day.'

"Oi," Malfoy shouted at where the ribbon had just disappeared. "How are we meant to get down?"

Harry tried not to freeze up whilst up in the air. He looked down at Ginny and the twins who show identically shock and confused faces. There was another bang as the red ribbon appeared once again

'Ah! It seems that we have detected a slight...flaw... in our prank today.'

'The Prince of Mischief would like to apologise to Mr Potter and Mr Malfoy by saying that even though we do have an antidote for the

weightless potions we spiked you with this morning. It would also mean revealing who we are and we would prefer not to receive detention.'

'Therefore, you will just have to wait until the potion wears off.'

"And how long is that?" Harry asked, continuing the act of him being as much in the dark as Malfoy was.

'Technically...we don't know, but it should wear out by the end of the day...we hope.'

'We hope you had fun and...well...see yah.'

"Oi," Malfoy shouted out again. "Get us down!" However, the red ribbon didn't return this time. Pretending to be grumpy at the fact that he had to stay up in the air until the potion wore off, Harry flew down to the Gryffindor table. It was only when he got there did he realise the Snitch still fluttering in his hand. With a bang, the red ribbon was back.

'We are sorry to come back once again. But we realised that we forgot about the Snitch. Can Mr Potter please say the words, "Subsisto Volatilis" and then hold the Snitch out in his palm.

"Subsisto Volatilis" Harry said and the golden Snitch stopped flapping about. Harry held out his hand, and then wandlessly cast an invisible spell on it. The Snitch vanished from view, but he could still feel the wait of the Snitch on his palm.

'Thank you Mr Potter and have a good day'

After that sentence, the red ribbon vanished for good. Malfoy started to fly back to the Slytherin table while Harry flew the rest of the way back to the Gryffindors.

"That was brilliant!" Ron exclaimed as Harry reached the table. Hermione opened her mouth to say something just as Dumbledore stood up from the heads table.

"I would like to congratulate The Ghosts of the Marauders on a rather joyful prank. I would also like to say that I hope that their identities are not revealed as sadly, pranking is against the school

rules and you would find yourself in detention," Dumbledore announced. "For now, let's get back to our breakfast."

"Come on," Ginny said to the others. "Let's get out of here."

The seven of them got up and walked out of the Great Hall while Harry flew above them. When they got to the Entrance Hall, Ginny led them up the stairs. Harry flew by Ginny and making sure no one was looking he un-cast the invisibility spell on the Snitch and slipped it into her pocket. Ginny flashed him another one of her smiles as she led them to the fourth floor.

"You guys going to the library?" Harry asked Hermione.

"Yes," she replied. "But I doubt we're going to find anything. We can't find them anywhere."

Harry wondered why Hermione was being so secretive about what they were looking for, but then he suddenly realised that Fred and George were still with them. While Hermione, Ron and Neville headed off to the library, Harry, Ginny, Fred and George walked up the stairs to the seventh floor corridor.

When they got there, Fred and George headed off to the common room while Harry led Ginny towards the Room of Requirement. As soon as Harry and Ginny turned the corner so they no longer were in view of the twins, Ginny slipped her right hand into Harry's left.

"Here," Ginny said, taking the Snitch out of her pocket and handing it to Harry. "This is yours."

"Thanks," Harry said, taking it and putting it in his jacket pocket. "You okay?"

"Fine," Ginny said.

"Not still worried about yesterday?" Harry asked her.

"You're here aren't you?" Ginny said, smiling up at him. "That's all that matters."

When they arrived at the tapestry of Barnabas the Barmy, Ginny walked backward and forward until the door appeared and she led

Harry in. It wasn't their usual classroom, though. It was a warm, sunny summer's day out on a large cliff top over looking the beach below.

"You promised we would get to do some flying." Ginny answered his un-asked question. "Now give," she added playfully, holding out her hand.

"What makes you think I have the potion?" Harry said, flying upwards out of her reach.

"Cause I felt it when I gave you the Snitch back." Ginny smirked.

"Can't hide anything from you can I?" Harry joked out.

"You should know that by now." Ginny retorted as Harry handed her the potion and she downed it in one. Soon Ginny had floated up in the air and together they flew about the cliff top having the time of there lives.

"Harry?" Ginny asked after an hour of flying.

"Yes?" Harry replied, hovering next to her.

"We should do this more often," Ginny said.

"We should," Harry agreed. "It's fun."

Ginny floated closer as she slipped her hand into his and for the rest of the morning they flew together around the cliff top and down along the beach hand in hand, enjoying the cold air against their faces.

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It was three hours later when Harry felt a strange feeling in the pit of his stomach and guessed that the potion was wearing out. He let go of Ginny's hand and flew to the ground, rubbing his stomach as Harry felt a loud burp coming. Harry was a couple of inches above the ground when he burped aloud and suddenly dropped to the ground. There he watched Ginny enjoy herself for the next ten minutes before she too burped out and fell next to Harry.

"Enjoy yourself?" Harry asked her as she sat up.

"We have to do that more often," Ginny said, wiping some grass off her trousers.

"We have the Snitch," Harry reminded her. "We can ask for some brooms and fly about trying to catch it."

"Nah," Ginny said as she moved closer to Harry and leant against him as Harry wrapped his arms around her waist. "I need to do some lessons. We didn't do much yesterday."

"True," Harry said as he closed his eyes and the scenery changed around them to their usual room.

"So, we were doing the Bat-Bogey Hex?" Ginny asked, getting up and taking her wand out of her pocket.

"You know you can do it Ginny," Harry told her, getting up himself. "We just need you to do it so you know for definite that you don't have any worries when you need to do it in real life."

Ginny nodded and headed over to the empty space where they practised the spells and Harry followed her. Harry gave Ginny a warm, encouraging smile as she got ready to cast her spell.

"Remember," Harry told her. "Calm, relaxed, focused."

"Right," Ginny said as she closed her eyes. Harry saw her breathing to slow down and her body to relax. Ginny opened her eyes, raised her wand, and shouted clearly and decisively, "Bates Moccos." A rather large, powerful yellow light flashed its way out of Ginny's wand and raced its way across the room where it crashed into the wall sending bits of dust and stone about. Harry almost danced for joy as he walked over to Ginny as he saw a smile tug at her lips.

"Remind me not to ever get on your bad side, Gin." Harry said, snaking his arms around her waist. Ginny pocketed her wand and then put her hands over his, which now lay on her stomach.

"I don't think that's even a possibility," Ginny said, leaning against him.



"That's good," Harry told her. "Because I don't really want to be on the end of that."

"Don't worry," Ginny said, "You won't be. Unless you do something really, really, bad."

"Good. Because I won't," Harry said and Ginny laughed. "Well, you did that once..."

However, Ginny cut him off. Not with finishing the sentence, but simply raising her wand and casting the Bat-Bogey Hex again. Harry was quiet for second as Ginny turned in his arms to smirk up at Harry.

"Well," Harry said. "I think you got that spell sorted. Time to get on with the next one, I think."

"Yes," Ginny agreed, still smirking. "I think so, too."

A/N: aloha. Hope you all enjoyed this chapter. There's only four more chapters left of this year now after this one. Harry and Ginny are getting so close! Not long now, before they admit how they feel to one another. Can't wait to write that scene. It's going to be so good. R&R. On with the next chapter.

Disclaimer: I Do Not Own Harry Potter

The week passed by Harry and Ginny in a whirl of fun. It wasn't the lessons in the classroom that the two enjoyed, but rather the lessons in the Room of Requirement. After Ginny proved to Harry that she indeed had the Bat-Bogey Hex down to a tee, Harry had started to teach her the disarming spell. It wasn't very difficult to do and she had it mastered in one lesson. They then moved onto various other spells to help Ginny improve her arsenal. Harry wanted her to be able to defend herself if she ever felt the need to do so.

Today they were practising the stunning spell. Harry sat on the sofa in their usual classroom as Ginny was standing in the usual practise area, as the two of them had come to call it. Ginny held her wand aloft, her body relaxed but focused.

"Stupefy!" Ginny called out, causing a bolt of red light to shoot out of her wand. The red light zoomed half way across the room before it sizzled out. Harry watched Ginny frown slightly before walking over to the table where a drink appeared. She drank it slowly, thinking.

"Everything okay?" Harry asked her.

"Sure," Ginny said, smiling back. "That was only my second try. I don't expect to be able to do the spell right away. Do you have any tips as to what I might be doing wrong, though?"

"Not really," Harry replied thoughtfully. "Your body is relaxed and you're concentrating. I think it's just getting your magic used to the spell. Try letting a little more power go into your spell. It might help."

Ginny nodded before finishing off her drink and going back to the practise area. Harry, after teaching Ginny the basics of spell casting, had very little to do now that Ginny could read about the spell in the books that Harry had gotten out of the library for her. She was now practically teaching the spells herself. Harry was now starting to teach her to control the exact amount of power that she needed put into the spell. It was going to be a slow process, and Ginny had to be patient with it. However, Harry felt that she had the ability and the know how to be able to start putting more power or less power into a spell as she saw fit.

Ginny raised her wand and with a concentrated look, cast the stunning spell. The red light shot out of her wand and Harry noticed that it was brighter and more powerful than the last time. The red light flew across the room and smashed into the opposite wall, putting a pleased smile onto Ginny's face. Ginny then cast the spell four more times before both her and Harry were satisfied that she had the stunning spell sorted.

"What spell you want to learn next?" Harry asked. Ginny threw herself down onto the sofa next to Harry and put her feet up and leant against him in her now usual position. Harry put his arm around her and she snuggled into him, picking up the book Harry had gotten from the library of spells.

"I quite like the bluebell flames Hermione can cast. I did think of the warming charm you use on me when I'm cold, but that's fourth and fifth year spell work and I'm not sure if I'm ready for that," Ginny said, looking through the spell book.

"You do know that is a third year spell, right Ginny?" Harry told her.

"It is?" Ginny asked

"Yes," Harry said, nodding. "Hermione is especially good at fire spells. Therefore, you'll probably find it more difficult to conjure it than Hermione would. In addition, after you conjure it you'd need to be able to control it, which takes up lots of magical energy. You're still doing your mediation, right?"

"Of course," Ginny said, nodding.

"Well, we can try the spell if you wish," Harry told her. "I know how to conjure water so if it gets out of hand, I can easily put the fire out. Be warned, though. This isn't first or even second year magic. You are going to struggle with this spell at first. I'll be very surprised if you even create a spark today, let alone the blue bell flames. And like I said, once you've conjured the flame, it's very difficult to control it. You'll need extreme concentration for this."

"I want to try," Ginny said, determined to learn as much magic as she could.

"Very well," Harry said, getting up. "The incantation is 'Incendia Floreo' You're going to find this difficult, Ginny. I also don't want you to put too much power into the spell, either. It's fire and too much of it can become very dangerous and I don't want to see you get hurt."

"Okay," Ginny said in understanding.

"Good, now let's practise," Harry told her.

They practised all morning. Harry wasn't kidding when he said it could take Ginny all week to master. By the time lunch had arrived, Ginny didn't even manage to get a spark out of her wand.

"Don't be discouraged, Ginny," Harry said, taking her hand as he led her down the corridor. "I told you this spell is difficult and it will take a lot to get right."

"You think I'll be able to, though?" Ginny asked thoughtfully.

"If I didn't, I wouldn't let you try it out. I reckon you will get it eventually. But I wasn't kidding when I said I expect it to take all week, if not longer. I also don't want you practising this spell when I'm not there, either. If you lose control, you can seriously injure yourself, and I don't want anything to happen to you."

"I promise," Ginny said, nodding.

Lunch was a normal affair. They ate with the others and they updated Harry and Ginny on their progress. Which didn't take very long as they still hadn't found any of the expulsion records.

"I'm starting to think of asking Madam Pince about them," Hermione said.

"I thought you didn't want to draw attention to what you were researching," Ginny commented, taking a mouthful of food.

"And you need to realise that it might not be the person who was expelled last time," Harry said. "Dumbledore was teacher fifty years ago. He would know who was expelled. Therefore, he probably has an idea of who's behind it if it is someone connected to the attacker fifty years ago. Which means he wouldn't let them attack students."

"True," Hermione said. "We never thought of that. And I doubt Dumbledore would tell us who was expelled fifty years ago. Still, even if it isn't the person who was expelled fifty years ago, they might know something behind these attacks now. Might have some idea behind who it is."

"Maybe. But surely Dumbledore would have asked them that and he would keep an eye on the people the person said," Harry said to her.

"You bring up a good point,." Hermione agreed. "But what other options do we have? We're running out of avenues to search. The letter from the ministry stated that no one was sent to Azkaban."

"Unfortunately, you're right," Harry said. "All you can do is keep at what you're doing now, and just hope for the best."

After dinner, Harry and Ginny returned to the Room of Requirement and continued to practise the blue bell flame. By the time curfew came around, Ginny hadn't even managed to conjure a spark. However, to Harry's surprise, Ginny wasn't getting frustrated. She was calm and she tried and listened to the advice Harry gave her.

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The next morning, Harry woke up late and he hurried down to breakfast, trying to get to the Great Hall in time to have a bite to eat before he had to go off to lessons. When he rushed into the Great Hall, he stopped and stared, around trying not to moan out. The Great Hall was covered in pink. Confetti was falling from the ceiling and all of the girls were rather giggly. How could he forget that today was Valentine's Day?

With a look of disgust at the surrounding decorations that included pink flowers on the wall, Harry walked sulkily to the Gryffindor table and slumped down next to Ginny. Hermione had a strange smile on her face and Neville and Ron looked just as disgusted as he did. Ginny, on the other hand, didn't look disgusted, but she wasn't over-giggly, either.

"This is pathetic," Ron moaned out.

"It's not pathetic," Ginny said, taking some of her drink. "It isn't exactly great, either, though. Why does everything have to be pink? Why does everyone think pink equals romantic?"

"I hate Valentine's Day," Ron muttered. "I don't get why everyone wants to get so giggly around each other."

"Just because you have the emotional range of a teaspoon, Ron, doesn't mean others do," Hermione said to him.

Ron was just about to retort but was cut off when Lockhart stood up to make an announcement. "Happy Valentine's Day!" Lockhart announced to the assembled students. "And may I thank everyone who has sent me a Valentine's card so far this year. Forty-six people in total, I believe. Yes, I have taken the liberty to set up this surprise for you all. And this is only the beginning." Lockhart clapped his hands and in marched dwarves dressed up as cupids.

"My friendly carrying cupids!" Lockhart announced as everyone watched the dwarves file into the hall. "They will carry around your valentines for you all from your secret admirers. And the fun doesn't stop here. Why don't you ask my colleagues to enter into the spirit of the occasion? Why not ask Professor Snape how to whip up a love potion! Or ask professor Flitwick about entrancing enchantments. He knows more about them than any other wizard I know, the sly old dog."

Professor Snape and Professor Flitwick didn't seem to be in the mood to do as Lockhart suggested. In fact, Snape looking downright murderous.

"Please don't tell me you sent him a Valentine's Day card," Ron moaned out at Hermione as they walked up the stairs to their first lesson. Hermione didn't answer, but continued to walk on ahead. "Great."

The day was full of dwarves barging into lessons delivering singing valentines, much to the displeasure of the teachers. It was just after lunch when a dwarf caught up to Harry. He was once again waiting outside the Charms classroom when the dwarf appeared, and Ginny was in the corridor heading to Defence Against the Dark Arts.

"I've got a singing valentine to deliver to Harry Potter in person," The dwarf announced when he reached Harry. Harry looked over to Ginny, who looked confused and slightly hurt. Wondering why Ginny would be slightly hurt that he was receiving a valentine from her, Harry brought his attention to the dwarf who started singing.

'You're in my thoughts and in my heart  
Wherever I may go;  
On Valentine's Day I'd like to say  
I care more than you know.'

'Valentine's Day is for expressing affection;  
Fond thoughts are coming your way;  
We've always had a special connection,  
So Happy Valentine's Day!'

The dwarf bowed before walking off down the corridor, leaving sniggering students behind him. Harry didn't care. He walked across the corridor heading straight to Ginny.

"Thank you," Harry whispered to her when he finally got to her.

Ginny frowned before speaking. "You think that came from me?" Ginny asked, wide eyed. "I didn't send that, Harry."

"You didn't?" Harry asked. No wonder it was different from what he remembered!

"No," Ginny said, shaking her head and looking down. "I take it you've got another admirer." She sounded downtrodden and disappointed.

"Who cares," Harry said. "Who needs another admirer? You're good enough for me."

"I am?" Ginny asked, looking up at him.

"Of course," Harry said, nodding. Harry thought about who else could have sent him a Valentine's card. Then it hit him. "They're so dead," Harry hissed, surprising Ginny.

"Who?" Ginny asked confused.

"Come on, Ginny. Who do you think might've done this for fun? They made it sound like it was coming from someone I know, so it obviously was made to make me think it was from you. Can you think of anyone who would do that?" Harry asked.

Ginny frowned for a moment before she too realised who had sent the valentine. "I'm so glad I have my Bat-Bogey Hex back," Ginny said as she started to walk down the corridor.

"You've got lessons Ginny," Harry said, grabbing a hold of her arm to stop her from going after them. "We'll pay them back later. I promise."

"I can Bat-Bogey Hex them," Ginny insisted.

"If you have your heart really set on it, alright. But we do have the chest of potions," Harry reminded her.

"The Bat-Bogey Hex will hurt more," Ginny said, smirking.

"They are your brothers," Harry reminded her.

"And I'm their sister," Ginny said. "It didn't stop them doing this."

"True," Harry said, nodding. "We'll speak after class, though." Sighing, Ginny agreed and walked into her classroom. Harry turned back to the others, who were very confused.

"What just happened?" Hermione asked.

"What?" Harry asked confused.

"Well, you and Ginny just seemed to suddenly know who sent the valentine," Hermione said, frowning. "I mean, you didn't speak, you two just suddenly knew."

"Of course," Harry said, shrugging. "It's not that hard to figure out."

"Care to enlighten us, then," Ron said.

"The twins," Harry told them "They sent it as a practical joke."



"And you both came to the same conclusion at the same time?" Hermione asked disbelievingly.

"I did have to prompt her a bit, but when you grow up having the twins as brothers it doesn't take a genius to work out whether the twins are behind it or not," Harry said.

"But they're not your brothers, though," Hermione said, frowning.

"As good as," Harry shot back. "The only thing stopping me being a Weasley is flaming red hair and different parents."

"I wonder what you would look like with flaming red hair," Neville said jokingly.

"Pretty good, actually," Ron piped up. "The twins pranked him on his ninth birthday." All five of them laughed aloud as they made their way into the Charms classroom.

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That evening, straight after classes, Harry and Ginny stalked up to Harry's dormitory to plan their revenge.

"What potion do you think we should use?" Ginny asked Harry as she sat down on his bed.

"Well, we need to figure out if we want to give them a potion," Harry reminded her, sitting down beside her. "First off, we don't know how they persuaded the house elves to put the potions into the food and drink. Secondly, they will be suspecting retaliation from us.

"So what do we do?" Ginny asked.

"I don't know," Harry said, shrugging. "Like I said, they will be suspecting a potion and they will be able to block any spells we throw at them."

"They will?" Ginny asked him.

"Okay. Let's revise that. They will be able to block all spells that I am willing to reveal that I can cast," Harry said to her and Ginny nodded, understanding.

"So, how do we get them back?" Ginny asked. "Don't say we can't. I want to get them back."

"So do I," Harry said. "Even if it was actually a nice poem."

"You really think I sent that to you?" Ginny asked him.

"Yeah, I did," Harry said.

"And you didn't mind?" Ginny asked again. "I mean, when you thought it was from me."

"Why would I?" Harry asked. "You're my best friend and I care a lot about you."

"Thanks," Ginny said, leaning against Harry.

"So," Harry said, "what are we going to do about the twins?"

"Do you think they can block my Bat-Bogey Hex?" Ginny asked, intertwining her left hand in Harry's right.

"Doubt it. They've never done so before," Harry said. "But do you really want to Bat- Bogey Hex them?"

"Yes," Ginny said.

"Alright, you can Bat-Bogey Hex them," Harry said.

"So, what now?" Ginny asked, looking up at him.

"We go to the Room of Requirement so you can practise as usual," Harry told her.

Fifteen minutes later, Harry and Ginny were walking through the door of the Room of Requirement and Ginny went straight over to the practise arena. Once there, she threw a couple of Bat-Bogey Hexes around.

"Practising for later?" Harry asked her.

"Yes," Ginny said.

"I feel almost sorry for them," Harry said, laughing.

"They deserve it," Ginny said as she threw another Bat-Bogey Hex.

"Okay," Harry said. "You've practised that enough. You've made sure you can cast it. Now, let's get on with the actual lesson."

Ginny nodded and changed the spell she was using to the blue bell flames and tried to cast it. After half an hour of constant practising, a flicker of blue fire appeared out of her wand. It went as quick as it came, but it gave Ginny a bit more confidence that she could master it.

They spent all evening in the room. Ginny tried to cast the spell for half an hour before taking a ten-minute break before going to have another go at the spell. Harry was surprised at Ginny's determination to cast the spell. When it came to curfew, Ginny knocked it off, sweating slightly but pleased none the less. The flicker of blue light had become more prominent, but she still hadn't managed to cast it fully and keep it there.

As they made their way back to the dorm, Harry's thoughts wandered. It was Valentine's Day today. He should really do something for Ginny. Something she would like. Kissing her instantly come to mind. He had been willing to kiss her not two weeks ago, and it was Valentine's Day. The question still remaining is was Ginny in love with him? He could almost imagine it being a possibility with the way they were acting towards each other. Letting go of her hand and draping it over Ginny's shoulder, Ginny automatically leaned into him, resting her head against his shoulders, closing her eyes in exhaustion.

When they got back to the tower, the common room was empty. Harry guessed that it was later than they had originally thought. Harry wondered why they didn't run into any teachers or prefects on their way back. Surely someone would be monitoring the halls at that hour!

"I guess everyone is in bed," Ginny said, yawning.

"It sounds like you should be, too," Harry told her as he led her to the girls' stairway.

"Probably," Ginny said sleepily as she let go of Harry's hand. "I'll see you in the morning?"

"Of course," Harry said. "I wouldn't want to be anywhere else."

Smiling, Ginny started walking up the stairs to the girls' dorms. When she was on the third step, Harry had made up his mind. Stepping closer, Harry took Ginny's hand again, forcing her to stop and look back questionably at Harry. Smiling, he stepped onto the girls' stairs, causing Ginny to look shocked as the stairs didn't turn into a slide.

Smirking at Ginny's shock, Harry took both of Ginny's hands in his, bent ever so close to her, and kissed her gently and lovingly on the cheek. When he pulled back, he let go of her hands with his right and cupped her cheek.

"Happy Valentine's Day Ginny," Harry said quietly to her as she stood, beaming at him.

Ginny stood for a moment, beaming up at Harry, before she took a step forward towards him, stepped on tiptoes, and returned the favour by kissing him on the cheek. Harry smiled at her when she pulled back and Ginny just simply smiled back.

"See you in the morning?" Harry asked her.

"Of course," Ginny said. "I wouldn't want to be anywhere else." Harry chuckled as he watched Ginny walk up the remaining stairs to her dorm. Harry headed to his dorm, never managing to stop smiling. As he got to his dorm, Harry noticed a letter on his pillow.

Frowning, Harry went over to the letter and opened it. Harry instantly recognised Ginny's writing. On it was a poem, which Harry read to himself.

I wish you were my Valentine

Though I may not be yours,

And I may, in my ignorance,

Be speaking to closed doors.

I have no inkling of your heart,

No hint what you might say;

But when I think of you the sun

Will just not go away.

There is in you a loveliness

That makes my darkness shine,

And so I'll wait, if wait I must,

To be your Valentine.

A/N: Short but sweet. That's all I have to say about this chapter. Short but sweet. I would like to say that Harry and Ginny aren't actually officially together YET. All though that will happen very very soon. And Ginny isn't dumb, she does know Harry has feelings for her now. Especially after that last scene. All it is now is just basically waiting for them to admit how they truly feel about each other. Aka, that they're in love. Sry that its so short. But that's life. You have to make the most of it.

Disclaimer: I Do Not Own Harry Potter

Harry sat on the usual couch in the Room of Requirement as he watched Ginny try to cast the blue bell flames. She had been at it for a while now and she nearly had it.

"You weren't kidding when you said this was hard," Ginny said, wiping some sweat off her forehead.

"You can stop if you want," Harry told her.

"No," Ginny said, sipping some water she had asked for from the Room of Requirement. "I can do this. I've made progress, haven't I?"

Indeed she had. In the weeks that had passed since she had started, she had come a long way. She could easily call off the flame in existence, and she could keep it going for ten minutes. However, the bluebell flame was meant to be waterproof, and whenever Harry put some water on the flames, it always went out.

Ginny hadn't given up, though. She had taken it as a challenge and she had been meditating more and more to try to improve her concentration whilst also continuing to cast the spell to make her magic grow. You could often see her in corridors when no one was looking, casting the flame and trying to make it to follow her around so her magic reserves grew, and she could hold the flame even under Harry's water charm.

"Indeed you have," Harry said. "And if I'm being honest, more than I thought you would. Which is a good thing, but don't wear yourself out."

Ginny nodded and went back to the empty space where she practised her magic and started up again. She called forth the blue bell flame and it appeared in front of her. Harry watched Ginny for a while as she concentrated on the keeping the flame alive. After fifteen minutes, Harry conjured an empty jar, scooped up the flames into it, and closed the lid. The flame threatened to flicker out of existence for a moment before going back to normal and the two of them sat down on the sofa with Ginny leaning against Harry.

"I can't believe I can cast that spell now," Ginny muttered as she washed the flamed dance about.

"I haven't tested it with water, yet," Harry reminded her. "And we don't know if it produces heat yet, either."

"How do we test the heat, then?" Ginny asked. Harry closed his eyes and all of the sudden the temperature in the room dropped dramatically. Ginny's breath was visible in the air and she started to shiver. Two jumpers and two large coats appeared in front of them and Harry and Ginny quickly put them on. Then both of them huddled around Ginny's flame, enjoying the heat coming from the jar.

"See," Harry said to her as he pulled her closer to him so they kept warm. "It works perfectly well."

"Gee, I so glad we tested it like this," Ginny drawled.

After five minutes of them both enjoying the warmth the blue bell flame gave them, Harry turned the temperature of the room back and up made the jumpers and coats disappear.

"All we need to do now is test to see if it's waterproof or not," Harry said, lifting the jar away from the flame. "You ready?"

"As much as I'll ever be," Ginny said, nodding and pointing her wand at the flame.

"Alright, on three," Harry told her as he pointed his wand at the flame. "One, Two, Three! Aguamenti!" A jet of water came out of Harry's wand and crashed into Ginny's flame. There was smoke coming from it, but Harry could just make out the flame fighting for survival.

Ginny was sweating hard. Harry kept up with the water for a minute before cancelling the spell. Harry watched as the water died away, leaving the table and surrounding floor soaked. But there, on the table, where it was before was the blue bell flame.

"Ginny!" Harry cried out ecstatic. "You did it!"

Ginny smiled weakly at him before the flames flickered out of life and Ginny collapsed onto the couch. Harry, worried, raced to her to check if she was all right.

"I'm okay," Ginny said weekly. "It just took a lot out of me."

Harry waved his wand to get rid of the water and then sat down next to Ginny, draping his arm around her and letting Ginny lean against him.

"I think that's it for tonight," Harry told her. "You're too worn out after that."

"Yes," Ginny whispered. "I understand why it's a third year spell. That was hard."

"Yes," Harry agreed. "That was hard what you just did. No third year could do that."

"I thought it was a third year spell," Ginny whispered again.

"It is," Harry said. "But what you just did, keeping it alive after a solid minute with me trying to put it out with water, was literally casting an underwater flame. That, Ginny, is OWL level magic."

"Why the hell did you make me do that, then," Ginny whispered.. "Especially after it's warn me out like this."

"Because I believed in you," Harry told her, kissing her on the forehead. "Because I believed you were powerful enough to do so." Ginny sighed in the pleasure of the kiss Harry gave her.

"Now what?" Ginny asked sleepily.

"We've got two hours before curfew," Harry told her, checking his watch. "We could play a game of chess."

"I'm too tired," Ginny said.

"You could just go to sleep, then," Harry said to her.

"Isn't it the twins' birthday tomorrow?" Ginny asked, yawning.

"It is," Harry said, nodding his head and then realised exactly what that meant. "Ginny! It's April Fool's day tomorrow!"



"The day of pranking," Ginny said, understanding. "The Ghosts can't miss this day. We would be a laughing stock."

"Come on," Harry said, taking her hand and helping her up. "I know you're tired, but we need to find Fred and George."

"We do," Ginny agreed, yawning as they walked out of the Room of Requirement and headed towards the common room. When they reached the common room, they saw the twins sitting by the window, jotting things down on a piece of parchment.

"Hey guys," Harry said as Harry and Ginny got closer to them.

"Hey bro," Fred said.

"Hey sis," George said.

"Hey," Harry said again, but Ginny just mumbled something incoherent.

"What's up with her?" Fred asked as she noticed that Ginny was leaning against Harry.

"She's just tired," Harry said. "Can you come up to my dorm for a sec?"

"Sure," Fred and George said together and they followed Harry and Ginny into Harry's dorm. Ginny instantly went to lie down on Harry's bed putting her head on his pillow.

"You're comfortable," Harry commented.

"Shut up," Ginny moaned out. "I'm tired."

"We can do this tomorrow," Fred said.

"No we can't," Ginny said, yawning. "It's April Fool's day tomorrow. We need to plan a prank."

"Indeed it is," Fred said.

"We wondered if you had actually forgotten," George said.

"We nearly did," Harry said.

"If it weren't for Harry remembering, we would have," Ginny said from Harry's bed.

"Alright," Fred said. "What have you got planned?"

Ginny handed Harry her key and Harry pulled out the chest of potions from his trunk and put the key in the lock.

"As it is April Fool's day, I reckon we should go all out with the pranks," Harry told them. "I'm not sure about you, but I think we should make this prank our best yet."

"True," Ginny said as she lay back down on the bed.

Harry looked at the instructions and then pulled out five levels of potions. He then, to the shock of Fred and George, put a whole tray of potions to one side.

"We're using all of them?" Fred asked.

"Yes," Harry said. "It is April Fool's day. The prank should be really big." Harry then put three more trays to the side.

"So, four trays of potions," Fred said.

"A tray to a house," Harry said.

"So we put these potions into the drink and food like the first prank," Fred asked.

"Yes," Harry said. "But we could get in trouble for this, according to the instructions the potions last about five hours. So it would last all morning and not wear out until lunch."

"So we would be going to class with the effects of these potions still happening?" Fred asked.

"Not really," Harry said. "You see, we wouldn't be able to do classes." Fred and George instantly agreed to do it.

"You don't know what the potions do," Harry reminded them.

"We don't need to know," Fred said, smiling.

"It gets us out of class all morning," George said.

"That's good enough for us," Fred said.

Chuckling, Harry turned to Ginny "What you think, Gin?" Harry asked her. No reply came from her. Ginny was lying down, her head resting on Harry's pillow, fast asleep. Smiling, Harry went over to her and shook her gently.

"Ginny," Harry said gently. Ginny just groaned, her arm shoving Harry away and then snuggling back down into Harry's pillow.

"She really must be tired if she falls asleep when we are planning a prank," Fred said. Harry shook her again and once again, Ginny unconsciously shoved Harry away.

"I suppose I could leave her there," Harry said thoughtfully. "I don't really want to wake her. Not after this evening."

"What happened this evening?" Fred asked, worried.

"Nothing wrong," Harry assured them. "She was just practising a spell and it wore her out big time."

"You're sure?" George asked.

"Positive," Harry said, nodding. Harry pulled the covers out from under her and then draped them over her, tucking her in.

"If you're going to let her sleep there, where are you going to sleep?" Fred asked.

"Probably down in the common room," Harry said. "You'd kill me if I slept in my bed as well."

"Too right," Fred said.

After closing the drapes around the bed so no one could tell that it was Ginny sleeping in the bed and not Harry, he walked out of the

dorm with the twins. When they reached the twins dorms, Fred turned around to speak to Harry.

"So what spell were you teaching Ginny that got her so worn out like this?" Fred asked. The twins obviously knew that Harry was good at magic after they had pranked Ginny on her birthday with the fake Hogwarts letter. Therefore, they weren't surprised when they learnt that Harry was teaching Ginny.

"The blue bell flames charm," Harry told them.

"Harry," George said, confused. "That's third year magic."

"I know," Harry said. "But Ginny can do it. Ginny can even make it water proof."

"She can?" Fred said surprised, wide eyed. "We haven't been taught that yet."

"No, that's fifth year magic," Harry told them.

"Your teaching Ginny fifth year magic?" George asked for clarification.

"I'm teaching her any magic I thought she might want to learn," Harry said, shrugging. "Ginny was the one who picked out the spell."

"So she's really good at magic then?" Fred asked.

"She's great," Harry said. "She had a problem to start with, but now she's picking up spells brilliantly. I'm going to start her on offensive spells soon."

"You don't need to do that," George said, obviously worried. "She has the Bat-Bogey Hex."

"Yes, she does." Harry said, nodding. "And it's very powerful. Especially with a wand suited for her. You'd better watch out. Ginny hasn't forgotten about the Valentine's rhyme."

Fred and George gulped. "We didn't think you two would mind," Fred said.

"Yeah," George agreed. "You two seemed to be getting so close recently."

"We don't," Harry said. "Well, I don't. And I don't think Ginny does, either. But it's principle, you know." Fred and George eyed each other worriedly.

"You guys better get off to bed," Harry said as they reached the twins' dorm. "You got to get up early tomorrow to do the potions."

"Alright," Fred said and the two of them turned to go, but Fred turned back. "Harry, what's going on between you and Ginny?"

"What you mean?" Harry asked.

"Well, it's just the way you two came in together," Fred said.

"Ginny was tired," Harry told them.

"You were holding hands," George said.

"Ginny. Was. Tired," Harry repeated. "She had her eyes closed most of the time on the way back. I was leading her along."

"Right, Harry," Fred said.

"Of course," George added.

"We don't mind if you two are dating..." George said, but Harry cut him off.

"We are not dating," Harry hissed out and then stopped. They weren't officially dating. However, Harry couldn't deny there was something going on. Whenever they were alone they always held hands, and Ginny always curled up with him on the sofa in the Room Of Requirement whenever they weren't practising spells. Harry and Ginny had kissed each other on Valentine's Day, granted, only on the cheek. In truth, the only thing Harry and Ginny hadn't done was kiss each other on the lips. He couldn't really deny that nothing was going.

"We're not, officially, dating." Harry corrected himself. "But I won't say there's nothing going on. That would be lying. You don't mind?"

Fred and George gave each other a serious look. "If you hurt her," Fred said.

"I've been her best friend since I was six," Harry hissed out heatedly. "I wouldn't dream of hurting her."

"Good," George said. "But if you did, it wouldn't be pretty."

"I am not going to hurt her," Harry said angrily. He couldn't believe Fred and George thought he might.

"We believe you," Fred said, "but she's our sister. We need to be looking out for her, you know."

"I know," Harry said, nodding in understanding. "You don't mind, then. I mean if Ginny and I..."

"No," Fred said.

"If we can't trust you," George said,

"Who can we trust?" Fred finished.

"Thanks," Harry said, smiling. "Don't mention this to Ginny. We haven't really talked about this yet."

"Don't worry," George said,

"Our lips are sealed," Fred said. And with that the twins walked into their dormitory. Smiling, Harry made his way down to the common room to spend the night on the sofa.

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The next morning Harry was shook awake early by a beautiful red head. "Ginny?" Harry asked, squinting.

"Why didn't you wake me Harry?" Ginny asked when Harry sat up and she sat down next to him.

"I tried," Harry said, yawning. "You wouldn't wake up. And after you getting worn out last night, I thought in the end it would be best if I

let you sleep. I closed the curtains around you and came down here."

"Fred and George?" Ginny asked.

"They know," Harry said. "They don't care. As long as I wasn't in bed with you, they didn't mind." Ginny blushed.

"I guess we shouldn't tell them about our first night back at the Burrow at Christmas, then." Ginny said, leaning against him.

"Do you want me dead or alive?" Harry asked her.

"Alive please," Ginny said, chuckling slightly.

"Then I suggest we don't tell them about that," Harry said.

"What did we finally agree on?" Ginny asked.

"What is the last thing you remember?" Harry asked her.

Ginny thought for a moment and then shrugged. "You getting lots of potions out, but not telling us what they did."

"Well. You'll be in a big surprise, then," Harry said, smiling at her. "There won't be any classes this morning."

"There won't be?" Ginny asked, frowning

"Nope," Harry said, shaking his head. "The potions won't run out until lunch. And with what the potions do to you, you can't have lessons."

"What do they do?" Ginny asked.

"You'll find out at breakfast," Harry said, smirking.

"Not fair. Tell me," Ginny said, sulking.

"Not even Fred and George know what the potions do. All they know is that there will be no lessons this morning," Harry told her.

"God," Ginny said. "You know how much trouble we could get into for that."

"They have no proof that we're the Ghosts," Harry told her.

"Other people know," Ginny said. "Hermione, Ron, and Neville. Not to mention the Gryffindor team."

"Yes, I know," Harry said. "But they're not going to tell on us, are they?"

"Just tell me what happens," Ginny moaned out.

"No," Harry said, smirking. "You'll find out at breakfast like the others."

"Fine," Ginny sulked.

"Ah come on, Gin," Harry said, putting his arm around her. "Don't sulk. Remember, you get the morning off from lessons."

Ginny shook her head, a small smile forming on her face. "There you go," Harry said, running a finger down her cheek. "I knew I could get you to smile."

"Pratt," Ginny said, sighing and resting her head on Harry's shoulder.

"Did you sleep well?" Harry asked her.

"Yes," Ginny said. "You still should have woken me up, though. Imagine my surprise when I woke up in your bed this morning."

"I tried," Harry said, exasperated, causing Ginny to giggle.

"So you say," Ginny said.

"So will Fred and George say," Harry retorted.

Harry and Ginny sat talking for a couple more minutes before the portrait hole opened up and Fred and George walked in. Harry stared at them and then at the boys stairs and then back at them.

"How did you get there?" Harry asked, confused.



"It's later than you think, Harry," George said.

"Yeah, I reckon you should get ready," Fred said.

"Wish you told us what the potions did," George said.

"He won't even tell me," Ginny said, crossing her arms in annoyance.

"You'll find out soon," Harry said, getting up. After he had washed and changed, he headed back down to the common room where Ron, Neville, and Hermione had joined the other three.

"You're not doing another prank, are you?" Hermione asked as soon as Harry stepped into the common room.

"What makes you say that?" Harry said, eyeing Hermione.

"Since Fred, George, and Ginny were down here already before us three came down here," Hermione said.

"And since you came down here and then went back up to take a shower and get dressed," Neville said.

"Gee, when did you get so smart?" Harry asked.

"It's also April Fool's day," Hermione said. "Everyone is going to be expecting a prank."

"True," Harry said.

"So, what have you done this time?" Hermione asked as they all started to head down to the Great Hall.

"Ask Harry," Ginny said,

"Yes," George agreed. "We don't know ourselves."

"So only Harry pulled this prank?" Ron asked.

"No, we all did," Fred said.

"But Harry is the only one who knows what the potions do," Ginny muttered.

"So?" Hermione asked.

"Not saying," Harry said in a singsong voice as he headed out of the common room.

"Why not?" Ginny asked.

"Probably because he knows we won't touch any food or drink if we knew what the potions did," Hermione said.

"Now, have we done anything like that before?" Harry asked. "The first prank was okay wasn't it? The second prank we just did Malfoy and I."

"True," Neville said.

"Then you've got nothing to worry about," Harry said, smirking.

"I don't like that smirk," Ginny said.

"Tough," Harry said, shrugging.

When they got down into the Great Hall, most of the school was already there eating. The six of them hurried off towards the Gryffindor table and Harry started waiting while the others were slightly nervous to start.

"You know, it will be kind of suspicious when things start to happen to other people and not to you," Harry told the others and cautiously, they started eating.

It took ten minutes before the potions took effect. Harry was just biting into his sausage when there was a loud cry from the Hufflepuff table and everyone turned to see a fifth year Hufflepuff who had started to sprout black fur on her face. Everyone watched as many other people also started to sprout fur. Harry looked around and noticed that the Ravenclaws were starting to sprout feathers. Soon everyone had stopped eating, but it was too late by then. All of them had either taken a drink or ate some food and the potions were in their bodies and Harry smirked as they took effect. The Slytherins'

skin were starting to turn green and have scales, and when Harry turn to look at Ginny next to him, she had fur on the back of her hand and had sprouted whiskers.

"What," Ginny hissed out, "is happening?"

"It's the potion," Harry replied as fur started to grow on Ginny's neck.

"Bloody hell," Ron said as he too started to notice fur on the Ginny and everyone around him. He then looked at himself and looked shocked.

"What's going on?" Hermione hissed out as people around him started to shrink.

"It's a prank, Hermione," Harry said as he too felt himself start to shrink.

Professor McGonagall sat at the teachers table in shock as she saw the entire school body change before her eyes. She watched as the whole Hufflepuff table slowly, but steadily, turned into badgers. She looked over to the Ravenclaws and saw people with beaks and wings and feathers and noticed that they were turning into eagles. Dreading what she would see when she looked over at the Slytherins, she turned her head and saw a very large number of snakes about. Shuddering, McGonagall finally looked over to the table that usually sat her own Gryffindors and found baby lions. Ghost's of the Marauders again. She knew it was Mr Potter, Ms Weasley and the Weasley twins. They only ever sat together whenever there was a prank. But unfortunately, that wasn't enough evidence to prove it was them who had pulled the pranks.

Harry felt very weird as a baby lion. First, walking around on four legs was rather different than walking around on two. Secondly, having a tail was also very strange. The strangest thing was that even though he had only been a baby lion for a minute, he could walk around and knew exactly what to do to move about as a lion. Harry guessed it was the potion.

Harry glanced to his left where Ginny sat and found a baby lioness looking around, confused. Harry walked up to her, nudged her gently, and looked into her eyes that were chocolate brown. As soon as

Ginny saw the emerald green, she relaxed and nudged him back slightly.

"You okay?" Harry asked, opening his mouth. Harry could no longer speak English, but as they were both lions, they could understand each other.

"Harry?" Ginny opened her mouth and her sweet voice came out. Harry did what he thought was a smile and laid down next to her on the floor.

"You okay?" Harry repeated the question

"Oh sure," Ginny said, lying down too. "Just the small little problem of being a baby lion."

"But you're a cute baby lion," Harry said.

"You said we would get all morning off," Ginny said to him.

"Well, you can't exactly go to lessons like this, can you?" Harry said to her.

"This is going to last all morning!" the voice of Hermione said from behind them, rather peeved.

"Err, hello," Harry said, walking around Ginny to hide him from Hermione.

"Don't use me as a shield, Harry," Ginny said, getting up and moving out of the way.

"How could you do this!" Hermione asked him. "How could you do this!"

"Quite easily, obviously," A baby lion with the voice of Neville came into view.

"Couldn't he of waited until we finished breakfast," Ron said, following Neville. "I don't mind missing classes, but missing the food is kind of a disappointment."

"We're lions," Hermione screamed at him. "Don't you care about that?"

"We get to miss classes," Ron said

"Honestly," Hermione said, shaking her head. "So what are we going to do for the morning?"

"Play about," The voice of Fred said as two identical baby lions walked into view.

"This is ridiculous," Hermione muttered.

"No," George corrected. "This is fun."

"Yeah," Fred said. "Cheer up. It could be worse."

"How?" Hermione asked.

"We could be snakes like the Slytherins," George said.

"I can't believe you four did this!" Ron said in awe.

"We didn't," Ginny said. "Harry did. I had no clue about this. He wouldn't tell me."

"He wouldn't tell any of us," Fred muttered.

"And that's because he knew we wouldn't eat anything if we knew this would happen," Hermione said.

"Sorry?" Harry tried. Hermione glared at him and Harry shuffled guiltily on the spot.

Professor Dumbledore started to get worried. The students had been animals for the past ten minutes, but they weren't changing back. Harry wouldn't pull a prank that interfered with classes, would he? He knew it was Harry, Ginny, Fred and George. Harry might be good at Occulmency and hiding things, but the others were not. Dumbledore looked at his pocket watch to see that classes were due to start in five minutes. Standing up, he addressed the school.

"I would like to say that this prank was very well thought out and a brilliant piece of pranking. However, it doesn't seem like you will be changing back anytime soon. I have been lenient with the Ghosts in the past because it didn't interrupt with the classes. However, as this prank doesn't seem to be following the previous pranks example, I, unfortunately, will have to hand out some punishments to the Ghosts after this is all over.

"For now, your head of house will lead you all back to your common room where you will stay until you change back." Dumbledore then looked at the Gryffindor table and at the lion that he thought might be Harry. "Then I will personally deal with the matter at hand once the Ghosts are human once again. Please don't all rush back to your common room and please try to be somewhat organised."

Harry looked at Ginny and the twins before sighing. "Maybe this was a little over the top," Harry said.

"A little!" Hermione screeched to him.

"I guess this is going to go on our permanent record, George," Fred said, starting to walk as Professor McGonagall led the Gryffindor lions out of the Great Hall.

"Great," George said happily.

"Mum won't be happy," Ginny said.

Harry shuddered at the thought. "Maybe Dumbledore will be kind enough not to tell her."

"One can only hope," Ginny muttered. "One can only hope."

Once they were out of the Great Hall, Harry noticed the front doors were ajar. Harry glanced at McGonagall, who was leading them back to the tower and started to slow down. Ginny who noticed this, slowed down to so she was walking next to her.

"What's wrong?" Ginny asked.

"I don't really want to get to go back to the common with everyone there," Harry muttered.

"You should have thought of that before changing everyone into animals," Ginny muttered.

"Are you mad at me?" Harry asked her.

Ginny looked at Harry and then gave him an affectionate nudge. "Of course not," Ginny whispered. "I'm just disappointed that you didn't tell me."

"If I told you, would you have let me do it?" Harry asked her. "Or ate any food."

"Yes," Ginny said. "I would have. I am a Ghost, after all."

"Sorry," Harry said, disappointed in himself that he hadn't trusted Ginny. Harry looked around and saw them coming up to the stairs. McGonagall was half way up them and wasn't paying attention. Harry looked behind him at the still partly opened front door.

"I don't really want to go back to the common room," Harry said, slowing down some more so that he had almost stopped walking.

"Well, we don't have a choice do we," Ginny said.

"The front door is ajar," Harry whispered to her. "You don't have to come."

"Of course I'm coming," Ginny said. "Why wouldn't I want to come?"

Harry gave another quick glance at McGonagall, looked at Ginny who nodded, and they both made a run to the door. No one noticed them slip out of the front oak doors or down the steps. Once they hit the lawn, Harry and Ginny raced across them and towards the lake and the trees surrounded it. Once they reached them, Harry looked back to check that they weren't followed. They weren't. Harry laid down on the grass as Ginny came to lie down next to him.

"So how long are we lion cubs for again?" Ginny asked as she shifted closer to Harry.

"Until around lunch time," Harry said, lifted his head up and gently putting it on the back of Ginny's neck. Ginny snuggled even closer to him.

"What do we do until then?" Ginny asked.

"Whatever we want," Harry said.

"We can play tag," Ginny said, rolling onto her back so she could look at Harry.

"Or we can stay here and enjoy the piece and quite," Harry said.

"Tag would be more fun," Ginny said, getting up.

"But I just got comfy," Harry said.

"Tough," Ginny said, putting her paw on Harry's back. "Tag."

For the next couple of hours, Harry and Ginny ran around the lake together playing tag and chasing each other about. This was much better than lessons, Harry thought as he chased Ginny around the trees and bushes. When it came closer to lunchtime, Harry decided that he had enough chasing Ginny about and launched himself on top of her, causing them to roll over and over until they stopped, Harry lying on top of her.

"Tag," Harry whispered out.

"Not fair," Ginny moaned out.

"How isn't that fair?" Harry asked her, cocking his head.

"I don't know," Ginny said, trying to wiggle away from Harry. "It just isn't."

"I didn't say I would play fairly," Harry told her, and Ginny relaxed.

"You have me at your mercy, Harry," Ginny said, nudging Harry's head with hers affectionately.

"I know I do," Harry said, nudging Ginny back. Ginny then closed the gap and gave Harry a small lick on the cheek, which Harry reckoned was meant to be a kiss.



"You know you are an awfully cute baby lion," Harry whispered to her.

"I know," Ginny said. Harry suddenly felt something growl in the pit of his stomach and he reckoned that the potion was wearing out. Harry was right when he noticed that Ginny was started to get bigger underneath him. Diving off her, Harry watched as he and Ginny started to grow and turn back into human beings.

Well," Ginny said after she had turned back. "That was actually quite fun."

"Glad you think so," Harry said, smiling at her. "I guess we'd better get going."

"I think that would be a good idea," Ginny agreed, nodding. So together, they got up and started to head back to the castle. Ginny fell in step with Harry and slipped her hand into his.

When they got back to the Great Hall, they were met by a rather thin-mouthed McGonagall. "I believe the headmaster told everyone to go back to their dormitories," McGonagall said to them curtly. "Can you two please follow me?" Harry and Ginny looked at each other and then followed McGonagall. She led them all the way to the headmaster's office. She said the Muggle secret password and nodded to Harry and Ginny to stand on the stairs.

"How much trouble do you think we will be in?" Ginny whispered as the stairs led them to the headmaster's office.

"We might get a couple of detentions," Harry said, shrugging. "Probably get lots of points deducted. But that's about it."

"We won't get expelled?" Ginny said.

"They don't expel you for pranking," Harry told her.

"But we did interfere with classes," Ginny said.

"No," Harry replied. "I interfered with classes. You three didn't have any idea what would happen."

"We're a group, Harry," Ginny told him fiercely. "We're all in this together, whether the twins like it or not." When Harry and Ginny reached the top of the staircase, Harry and Ginny stepped off and knocked on the door.

"Come in," a voice called from the other side of the door.

Harry and Ginny walked into the headmaster's office and saw Fred and George sitting in seats already. Harry and Ginny spotted two empty seats next to the twins and, figuring that they were obviously for them, they sat down.

"I would like to say I have rather enjoyed your pranks this year." Dumbledore started speaking to them in a calm voice. "They've been humorous and a joy to watch. However, today's prank went a bit further than I can tolerate. By all means, prank people. I rather quite enjoy it. However, when your pranks start to interfere with the running of the school and the classes, that is where I have to draw the line."

"They didn't know what the potions did, sir," Harry said. "Ginny hadn't had a clue at all."

"Rubbish! Of course I did," Ginny lied.

"No you didn't, Miss Weasley," Dumbledore said. "I was actually there in the boy's dormitory last night watching you four discuss the prank. Or rather, the three of you. You, Miss Weasley was asleep on Harry's bed. I must say I didn't realise that so much planning and thoughtfulness went into a prank."

"You were there?" Harry asked. Why didn't Harry feel his magic?

"Of course," Dumbledore said, nodding. "I'm always there when you four plan a prank. And word for the wise, Harry, I don't think Peeves will be very pleased that you have now left him out of two pranks. I think you'd better include him on the next one, don't you think?"

"Erm." Harry was lost for words.

"Now on with the punishment," Dumbledore said. "Like I said before, I was quite willingly letting you pull pranks as they were both harmless and didn't interfere with the general life in the school. As

that was not the case this time, I am going to have to give you four detentions. And I believe that also a hundred points from Gryffindor is suffice, as well. And unfortunately, I will have to write home to your parents."

"That's okay," Harry said, smirking. "Sirius would pat me on the back."

Dumbledore chuckled. "Yes, Harry I believe he would. But I was talking about Mrs Weasley. After all, you do call her mother while your home during the holidays and you are everything, but officially apart of the family. It is Sirius' name on the paper work, but I do believe that it is Mr and Mrs Weasley who act as parents towards you. You also spend almost all your time living at The Burrow rather than Potter Manor."

Harry gulped. "Yes Professor."

"Good," Dumbledore said, nodding. "I suspect you four to turn up here this evening, promptly at six, for your first detentions. "

"Yes, sir," The four of them said.

"Great," Dumbledore said. "You may leave. I think you four should also know that classes are cancelled this afternoon. And I would advise you to not put off going to your common room for too long."

"Thank you, Professor," Harry said.

"You're welcome," Dumbledore said, getting up and heading towards the door. "I eagerly await the Ghosts' next prank." The four of them bade the headmaster goodbye and made there way down the stairs.

"Well," Harry said once they were down the stairs and into the hallway. "That wasn't exactly what I was suspecting."

"You're telling me," Ginny said.

"We still have detentions," Fred said. "He didn't say how long the detentions were for."

"Or what we would be doing in them," George said.

"True," Harry agreed. "But at least it's with Dumbledore, and not with Snape or McGonagall."

"Time to go back to the common room, then," Fred said.

"This will be fun," George said.

"Yeah, a lot of fun," Harry drawled. "Everyone is going to try and curse the daylights out of us."

"Maybe," Fred said

"Can we like...go out and hang about in the grounds first for a bit?" Ginny asked nervously.

"Yeah," George agreed. "That sounds like fun."

"Come on," Harry said bravely as they turned down the seventh floor corridor and lead them the to the Fat Lady.

"Erm," Harry said when they got to her. "What's it like in there?"

"You'll see," The Fat Lady said, and, without even waiting for the password, opened them up and let them in. The buzz of talking in the common that met their ears as the portrait opened silenced very quickly as the four of them stepped into the common room.

"Umm, hi," Harry said nervously to everyone. There was some pushing and shoving and soon Ron and Neville appeared in front of them.

"That was bloody brilliant!" Ron said and the quartet stared at him in shock.

"Can't you let us in on your next prank?" Neville asked. Harry and others stared at the two of them blankly.

"When is your next prank?" a third year girl called out.

"Why couldn't you make it last longer so we missed all the lessons and not just the morning?" a fifth year boy called out. All four of them were speechless.

Harry heard his name called and he turned around to see Wood walking towards him. "That was a good prank. I had potions first. You don't know how glad I am that I didn't have to go."

"Isn't anyone mad at us for turning them into lions?" Ginny asked.

"Are you kidding?" Wood said. "Everyone is just happy they got the day off lessons. I didn't do my essay and I would have got detention if you didn't do this. Now I've got all afternoon to do it."

"So we're not going to get cursed into oblivion, then?" Harry asked.

"Nope," Wood said, shaking his head.

"Hey guys," Seamus shouted, coming over to them. "What are you planning for your next prank?"

"Can you make it last all day next time?" Dean asked, standing next to Seamus. Harry looked at Ginny, Fred, and George who was grinning madly.

"Maybe, Dean," Harry said. "Maybe."

It took the four of them a good ten minutes before they were left alone and they managed to make their way over to some empty seats. As soon as they sat down, Percy marched over to them.

"I can't believe how irresponsible you four behaved today," Percy started, but Fred interrupted him.

"Oh knock it off," he said. "Go bother someone who cares."

"I'm writing home to tell mum about this," Percy told them, lifting his chest high to act as if he was important.

"Don't bother," Harry said. "Dumbledore is already doing it."

"Well," Percy said. "I hope the four of you have learned your lesson and won't be pulling any more pranks."

"Oh, go snog your girlfriend, Perc," Harry said, getting annoyed. Fred, George and Ginny's faces all lit up in amusement. Percy started to splutter.

"I don't know what you're talking about," Percy managed to say.

"I'm sure Penelope won't be too pleased to here you say that," Harry smirked, causing the others to laugh out. Percy looked at Harry in shock before walking out of the common room, probably off to the Owlery to owl Mrs Weasley about this morning's prank.

"Percy has a girlfriend?" Ginny asked, her eyes alight with mischief.

"Yeah," Harry said, nodding. "It's the Ravenclaw prefect, Penelope Clearwater.

"When did they get together?" George asked

"Don't know," Harry said, shrugging. "I just saw them one day with the Marauder's Map in a broom cupboard. I suppose they could have been trying to help Filch clean the castle, but I doubt it."

Fred, George, and Ginny, laughed out again as Hermione made there way over to them, followed by Ron and Neville.

"So," Hermione said, glaring at the four of them.

"Did you have fun?" Fred asked jokingly.

"I really can't believe you four," Hermione said. "Doing this was absolutely..."

"Brilliant," Fred suggested

"Ingenious?" George tried.

"Imaginative?" Harry asked.

"Inspired?" Ginny added.

Hermione stared at them in complete shock. "Don't you care that you disrupted classes?"

The four of them looked at each other, thinking before all four of them at once said, "No." Hermione let out a little scream before flinging herself down next to them.

"How much trouble are you getting into?" Ron asked at he and Neville sat down, too.

"We got detentions and one hundred points from Gryffindor," Harry told them.

"One hundred points!" Neville said, shocked.

"We did interrupt classes," Ginny reminded him.

"True," Ron said nodding.

"When do your detentions start?" Hermione asked them.

"This evening at six with Dumbledore," Harry told her.

"You have detention with the headmaster?" Hermione said, shocked.  
"That must be bad."

"Yes," Ginny said, trying to hide a smirk. "So bad." They hadn't told them that Dumbledore had actually liked the pranks and was looking forward to the next one.

-oOoOoOoOo-

Come six o clock that evening, Harry, Ginny, Fred and George, arrived at the headmaster's office five minutes early. There, they waited for ten minutes before the stone gargoyle moved out of the way and they stepped on the revolving staircase taking them up to the door to the headmaster's room. Once they knocked on the door, they heard Dumbledore invite them in.

"Ahh," Dumbledore said as they walked into the room. "Great. We can get started." The four of them sat down in the chairs that they sat down earlier that afternoon and Dumbledore explained what they were going to do in the detentions.

"In these detentions you will be helping me sort out my library of books," Dumbledore stated. "In the past years it has become quite cluttered and disorganised. Now, if you would follow me."

Harry and the others got up and followed Dumbledore up the golden ladder that Harry had never been up before. They came onto a landing, which was covered in bookcases. Fred and George groaned behind him.

"Not to worry," Dumbledore said. "Those aren't the books that you will be sorting out." Dumbledore lead them down a small passage way and into a room covered in more books. "These are the books I wish you to sort out." The room was square in size and the floor was covered in loads of heavy books. "I wish for you to sort them out by which ever means you wish. However, it has to be logical. You will come here everyday at six and leave at nine. Your detentions will finish when you have finished sorting out this room. Now, I must get back to work." Dumbledore went to leave them and go back to his desk.

"Sir, are we allowed to use magic?" Harry asked.

"Of course," Dumbledore said. "But I suggest you figure out what you are actually sorting before you sort it." Once Dumbledore had left them, Harry took Dumbledore's suggestion and picked up a book from the floor reading out of curiosity.

"This is going to take forever," Fred said. "We can use magic, but we need to read them first before so we know how to sort them."

"We're going to be at this for the rest of the year," George said.

"No we're not," Harry said as he read the book he was reading and he smirked. Harry grabbed another book and read a page and his smirk grew. "These are books on pranks, guys. Look at this," Harry said grabbing a book next to him and opening it up, reading the page aloud.

"The Back to Front Curse," Harry read from the page. "This spell will cause the victim of the spell to think backwards is forwards and forwards is backwards. So, in order to move forward, the victim would have to think and act as if he was walking backwards."



"Bloody hell," George said, taking the book from Harry.

"Look at this," Ginny said, reading a book. "The Antler Jinx. The victim of this spell will sprout antlers."

"The Densaugeo spell," Fred said, reading his book. "Causes the victims teeth to grow at an astonishing rate."

Harry, Ginny, Fred and George all looked at each other shocked. "We'll be spending a lot of time in here, then."

"We do need to sort them out," Ginny reminded them.

"Alphabetical order by title is logical," Harry told her.

"So, it will still take forever to do," Ginny said.

"No it won't. It will take roughly thirty seconds to do," Harry said. "I know a spell that will sort them all in alphabetical order." Harry, Ginny, Fred and George smirked at one another. This detention wasn't going to be half-bad. Not half-bad at all.

A:N: Hey ho. Another chapter bites the dust. On with the next.

Disclaimer: I Do Not Own Harry Potter

The next morning, Harry, Ginny, Fred and George walked down to the Great Hall in a joyful mood. Unfortunately, lessons were back on that morning but they didn't really care. The amount of information they managed to read from Dumbledore's private library was enough to make any prankster giddy. They couldn't wait until they could pull the next one.

When they walked through the doors into the Great Hall itself, students from every house turned to look at them. Could news travel that fast? How could the other houses know already that they were the Ghosts? Ignoring the muttering and the stares that were shot their way, the four of them made their way to their usual seats at the Gryffindor table and started to eat breakfast. It wasn't long before Hermione, Ron and Neville joined them.

"How can the whole school know already?" Neville asked, looking around at the students who were whispering and pointing.

"Someone in Gryffindor must have said something," Ginny said, confused.

"Come off it," Ron said. "Someone in Gryffindor dub you four in? Who on earth would do that?"

"Don't forget the teachers will know who we are," Harry said to them. "I bet you anything Snape told all the Slytherins that we were the Ghosts."

"While you make a good point," Fred said. "I don't see the Slytherins going to Ravenclaw and Hufflepuff and telling them that we were the Ghosts. So, how did they find out?"

Harry was just as lost as the other four. Until of course, Percy came striding into the Great Hall, followed shortly by Penelope Clearwater.

"That git," Harry whispered out.

"What?" Ginny asked after taking a mouthful of pumpkin juice.

"Percy," Harry said. "His girlfriend is Penelope Clearwater, who's in Ravenclaw. He must have told her. Then it spread around the school."

"I'm going to kill him," Ginny said. "I can't believe this! Slytherins are going to try to curse us every time we pass them."

"Snape would have told the Slytherins, remember?" Harry told her. "They would already know."

"Well, it's your own fault," Hermione said. "You were the ones that pulled the prank."

"Hermione, just stop it already," Ginny snapped at her, clearly annoyed. "We don't care if pranking is against school rules. We love doing it, and we will continue to do it." Hermione opened her mouth to retort but Ginny cut her off. "And we won't get expelled. We will get detentions, but we will never be expelled. Otherwise, Harry's dad and his friends would have been expelled in their first year. Instead, they stayed all seven years and got full marks on there N.E.W.T. exams. We're pranksters, Hermione. Live with it."

They ate breakfast uninterrupted until the owl post. The owls, as normal, came flying toward their owners and recipients, who took the letters, food and sweets sent by their parents and other family members. What surprised Harry, though, was that he also noticed Errol flying slowly towards them. He was carrying a red letter.

When Errol reached them, he crashed into Ron's drink, spilling pumpkin juice all over him and causing Ron to curse at the old bird. Hermione berated him for the foul language, but Harry and the others weren't paying attention. They were staring at the red letter which they all recognised as a Howler. Harry reached his hand over to it before Ginny grabbed his arm.

"What are you doing?" Ginny asked him.

"It's better getting it over with rather than waiting for it to do it itself," Harry told her as his fingers clasped the red letter. He took his knife and slowly slit the envelop open. As soon as he had opened it all the way, Mrs Weasley's voice came blaring out of it, causing Harry to drop the letter to the table.

"I CAN'T BELIEVE THE FOUR OF YOU!" Mrs Weasley voice shouted, echoing off the stone walls. "I THOUGHT I BROUGHT YOU UP TO BEHAVE BETTER THAN THIS. PRANKING IS ONE THING. BUT CAUSING A PRANK TO DISRUPT OTHER STUDENTS' EDUCATION IS TOTALLY UNCALLED FOR. YOU MIGHT NOT THINK MUCH OF YOUR FUTURE, BUT OTHER PEOPLE WANT TO MAKE A LIFE FOR THEMSELVES.

"DID YOU EVER THINK ABOUT THE PEOPLE WHO WILL BE TAKING O.W.L.S. AND N.E.W.T.s IN A COUPLE OF WEEKS TIME? YOU DISRUPTED THEIR LEARNING THAT THEY NEEDED TO GET THE BEST MARKS POSSIBLE! I DON'T KNOW WHAT I WILL DO WITH THE FOUR OF YOU, I REALLY DON'T. YOU'D BETTER BE RELIEVED THAT YOU ARE NOT COMING HOME FOR THE EASTER HOLIDAYS BECAUSE ALL FOUR OF YOU WOULD BE GROUNDED!

"INSTEAD YOU'LL BE GROUNDED WHEN YOU GET HOME FOR THE SUMMER HOLIDAYS. IF YOU CONTINUE ALONG THIS ROUTE THE FOUR OF YOU ARE GOING, YOU WONT HAVE MUCH OF A FUTURE TO LOOK FORWARD TO. IF I CATCH WIND THAT EITHER OF YOU FOUR ARE PULLING PRANKS AGAIN, THEN YOU WILL BE IN SERIOUS TROUBLE! DON'T DO IT AGAIN!"

The red envelope then caught fire and shrivelled up, leaving the four of them completely shocked. Soon the occupants of the Great Hall started to talk again and most people turned back to their food.

"Well," Hermione said. "I don't know what you four were expecting."

"Oh shut up," Ginny said, interrupting her. "We're not going to stop, are we?" she added to Harry.

"Of course not," Harry said smiling.

"Good," Ginny said.

"Better you than me," Ron muttered.

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"EXPELLIARMUS!"

A flash of scarlet light flashed across the room and crashed into Harry, causing him to soar into the air and slam against the wall. His attacker raced towards Harry as he slid down to the floor.

"Harry!" Ginny's voice called out to him. Harry looked up to see the long red hair of Ginny rushing towards him. She bent down and put a hand on his arm. "I'm so sorry."

"Sorry?" Harry said, wincing as he sat up. "Why the hell are you sorry? You did the spell. It did what it was meant to do."

"I hurt you," Ginny whispered.

"Not that bad," Harry told her as he asked the Room of Requirement for a drink and sipped the glass of water that appeared. After classes, as usual, Harry and Ginny had come to practise magic whilst the others went to research in the library. "But I don't think you need to practise the disarming spell again."

"Come here," Ginny said, putting an arm around Harry's waist, and helping him up, she led him to the sofa.

"Thanks," Harry said once he sat down.

"I don't like hurting you," Ginny whispered and Harry took a hold of her hand.

"I told you," Harry said, smiling at her. "It's okay. The spell did what it was meant to do. It disarmed me. I don't have my wand. It's good Ginny."

"Can the next spell please not hurt you?" Ginny said, leaning against him.

"I want you to learn spells you can defend yourself with," Harry said. "And I'm the only person you can test them on."

"Then I won't learn them," Ginny said. Harry chuckled at her.

"You need to learn them, Ginny. You want to learn them," Harry said. "And I'm the only person who you can practise on because I'm the only one who knows that I'm teaching you magic."

"Fine," Ginny said sighing. "I still don't like it, though."

"Thank you for caring, Ginny," Harry said squeezing her hand affectionately. "But I'll be okay. I've had worse knocks and injuries. Mostly from Quidditch."

"That doesn't mean we should injure you for the fun of it outside Quidditch matches," Ginny argued.

Shaking his head, Harry kissed Ginny on the forehead. "I'm alright. Stop worrying about me."

"That's easier said than done," Ginny said, sighing in pleasure of Harry kissing her. "If I asked you to stop worrying about me, would you?"

"No," Harry admitted.

"Then why expect me to not worry about you?" Ginny asked.

"Fine," Harry said, resigned to the fact that he had lost this one. "I'll let you worry about me."

"There's no let, Potter," Ginny told him fiercely. "You don't have a choice."

Laughing, Harry got up and Ginny followed him back to the practice area.

"So, what spell next?" Ginny asked.

"A Shield charm," Harry told her. "There are all types of Shield charms. The one I'm going to teach you is the Protego charm."

"Haven't heard of it," Ginny said.

"It's going to be hard. It's a fourth year spell," Harry told her. "But with you meditating and doing the bluebell charm spell, which is actually harder to cast, your magic will grow and you will be able to cast it."

"So what do you want me to do?" Ginny asked. "Try this spell or cast the blue bell charm."

"Both," Harry told her. Ginny frowned in confusion. "I want you to cast the blue bell charm whenever we're not learning magic. So, say if we're just reading in here. I want you to have the blue bell spell going on the corner. It will help you improve your magic."

"Okay." Ginny nodded. "But what are we going to do now? Reading or the Shield charm?"

"The shield," Harry said. "So the incantation is quite simply, 'Protego'. I want you to try it before I start testing it. Remember, relax, concentrate."

Ginny nodded before Harry saw her body relax and her breathing slow down. Ginny raised her wand and said "Protego." A blue coloured shield formed in front of her, coming out of her wand. Harry watched, awed, as Ginny kept the shield up for about thirty seconds before she cancelled the spell.

"Wow," Harry said to her. "Ginny how many times are you doing the blue bell flames?"

"Not much," Ginny said. "I did it quite a lot last week before I managed to keep it up with the water. I've only done it once or twice since then and only for a little while. No more than thirty minutes."

"I want you to cast the shield again but this time I'm going to throw some simple stinging hexes at it," Harry told her. "Don't worry. Stinging hexes are not that bad and they will only hurt you for a couple of seconds."

Ginny nodded before casting the Protego shield once again. Harry let Ginny hold it for a couple of seconds before he threw a very weak stinger. It reached Ginny's shield before it clanged against it and dispersed. Ginny let the shield drop, but Harry wanted her to keep it up.

"Ginny don't let the shield drop," Harry told her. "I'm going to keep throwing stinging hexes at it, putting more and more power behind it until the shield breaks. This will tell us how strong your shield is."

Ginny nodded and recast the shield as Harry started to throw stinging hexes at it again. He put more and more power behind each one until finally the shield charm broke and Ginny was hit with the hex. Ginny winced a little before recasting the shield.

"No, Ginny that's fine," Harry told her, sitting down.

"What you mean?" Ginny asked.

"I mean that shield charm is okay," Harry told her.

"But I've only cast it twice," Ginny said.

"I know," Harry said. "But that shield is very strong. No one will be able to curse you, Ginny. I mean, your brothers won't, nor will Malfoy. You got your Bat-Bogey Hex to attack and you know the disarming spell. I don't need to teach you anything else, Ginny."

"But what do we do now then?" Ginny asked.

"We have two weeks of doing whatever we want, " Harry said. "We do have homework to do." He reminded her.

"But we have the Automated Essay Writer," Ginny pointed out.

"True," Harry said, nodding. "But what else is there?"

"Quidditch!" Ginny said. "We could go swimming like before. We're in the Room of Requirement. We can do anything."

"Then choose," Harry told her. Ginny closed her eyes before a Quidditch pitch appeared in front of the two.

"I guess you want to play Quidditch, then," Harry said, smirking. "Brooms or weightless potion?"

"Broom," Ginny said, closing her eyes, and a broom appeared in front of her.

"Where's mine?" Harry asked her.

"This is yours," Ginny said, walking towards him and handing him the broom.



"Okay," Harry said, taking the broom. "So where's yours?"

"I'm going to join you on yours," Ginny said, smirking.

"Oh you are, are you?" Harry said, raising his eyebrows. However, Harry slid back on the broom and allowed Ginny to get on in front of him. There, she slid back to fit snugly between Harry's legs.

"Come on then, Potter," Ginny said. "Let's fly."

Harry kicked off the broom, causing gravity to take effect and make Ginny slide a little more so that there was no gap between them. As they soared high above the ground, Ginny's hair flew behind her and Harry smelt the intoxicating flowery smell that belonged to Ginny's hair conditioner.

For hours they flew together on the broom, doing dives and just flying around. They both took it in turns to control it. Ginny normally just flew about in circles whilst Harry was the one who dived about and went fast. After what seemed like forever, Harry slowed the broom down to stop in mid air.

"Did you have fun?" Harry whispered into the back of Ginny's head as he kissed it lovingly.

"I'm flying and hanging about with the person who means more to me than anyone else in the whole world," Ginny answered. "Of course I had fun."

"That's good to know," Harry whispered, kissing her head again lovingly. "We'd better get going or we'll be late for our detention." Flying down to the ground, Harry and Ginny dismounted and headed out into the corridor. There, they started to head towards the headmaster's office.

The detention that evening was just as good as the one before it. George had actually brought some parchment and quill and they spent most of the evening pouring over the books, jotting loads of spells down that they could use for their next prank.

Come nine o'clock, the four of them left the headmaster's office and walked back to the Gryffindor common room. Hermione, Ron and

Neville were sitting by the fireplace, a serious look on all four of their faces. Harry, confused, lead Ginny over to them whilst Fred and George went over to sit next to Lee.

When Harry and Ginny reached them, Hermione shook her head just before they were going to sit down. The four of them then lead Harry and Ginny up to the empty second year boys' dormitory.

"What's up?" Harry asked confused.

Hermione, Ron and Neville gave a worried glance at each other before Hermione spoke.

"We found them," Hermione said. "Well him, actually." Ginny stiffened beside him and Harry's mind raced. They found him? Does that mean they found out Hagrid was expelled?

"Who?" Harry asked slowly.

"The person who was expelled fifty years ago," Hermione said. "It was hard. We had to ask Madam Pince for help in the end. I know we didn't want to, but we couldn't find them anywhere. It turned out that they were behind her desk."

"Who was it?" Ginny asked quietly.

"Hagrid," Ron said. "There was only one person expelled fifty years ago. And that was Hagrid."

Harry laughed. "Hagrid? Hagrid opened the Chamber of Secrets fifty years ago? Come off it. Dumbledore wouldn't let him anywhere near the school if that were true. You have to be wrong."

"He was the only one expelled that year," Hermione said. "And Malfoy said..."

"Who cares what Malfoy said," Harry argued. "Hagrid is our friend! How could you think that he would attack Muggleborns?"

"You know Hagrid, Harry," Neville said. "We don't really think he opened it to attack students. We reckon he just heard about the creature and thought it would, you know, need to stretch its legs or something."

"Okay," Harry said, nodding. "But that doesn't explain the attacks this time. Hagrid wouldn't reopen the chamber this time. Not after someone died last time! And I doubt he would continue opening the Chamber of Secrets up fifty years ago once someone got attacked."

"Maybe it's someone else this time," Hermione said. "But Hagrid was the only one expelled fifty years ago."

"I don't believe it's him," Harry said defiantly.

"He was the only one expelled," Ron said.

"Fine," Harry said. "Let's go speak to Hagrid."

"What?" Neville said shocked.

"Let's go speak to Hagrid," Harry said again firmly. "Ask him about this."

"Oh yeah that would be a nice visit," Ron said sarcastically. "Hey Hagrid, have you let anything mad and hairy loose in the castle lately?"

"We'll I'm going," Harry said. "You lot decide whether you want to come." Harry walked over to his trunk, took out his key and put it in the middle lock. He opened up the trunk and pulled out his invisibility cloak and the Marauder's Map. He then handed the invisibility cloak to Hermione, Ron and Neville.

"It can't fit over the five of us," Harry said. "You three go to Hagrid's under the invisibility cloak. Ginny and I will use the Marauder's Map to avoid teachers and come down after you."

"Is this really a good idea?" Hermione asked.

"Yes," Harry said. "It will prove that Hagrid has nothing to do with this." Reluctantly and slowly, the three of them agreed. They flung the invisibility cloak over themselves and left the dorm.

Harry looked over to Ginny, who looked petrified. Harry walked over to Ginny and pulled her into a hug. "You said they wouldn't find anything out!" Ginny sobbed into his chest.

"They haven't," Harry said.

"They found out about Hagrid!" Ginny said, tears streaming down her face.

"Hagrid doesn't know anything!" Harry told her fiercely. "Hagrid wouldn't open the Chamber of Secrets. He wouldn't force you to open the Chamber of Secrets, Ginny."

"I know, but what if Hagrid knows something. What if he knows who opened it last time?" Ginny said.

"He would have told Dumbledore everything he knows," Harry told her, kissing her on the forehead. "I promise you, Ginny. They won't find anything out. They won't find out it was you. They got nothing to go on. I promise."

"You're sure?" Ginny said, afraid.

"Yes," Harry said to her, gently wiping some tears away from her cheek. "Believe me, Ginny. If I ever thought that they could find out it were you through Hagrid, I wouldn't have said for us to go down there."

"Okay," Ginny whispered.

"You alright?" Harry asked her gently.

"I thought this was all over, Harry," Ginny whispered. "I thought it was all over."

"It is," Harry said to her. "Believe me."

"We'd better get going," Ginny whispered.

"We've got about ten minutes," Harry said.

"We're meant to meet them down there," Ginny said.

"We will," Harry said, nodding. "Estelle." In a burst of flames, a red and golden phoenix appeared in front of the two of them.

"Hey Estelle," Harry said as the phoenix flew onto his shoulder and nudged his cheek affectionately.

"Long time no see, Harry," Estelle said in his mind. "How's Ginny doing?"

"Great," Harry replied. "She's doing great. Why haven't you been around much?"

"Because of Ginny," Estelle replied.

"I thought you liked her," Harry said to her worriedly.

"I do, Harry. I care for her as much as I care for you. But remember, your two souls are connected. Ginny will soon be able to talk to me through her mind and understand me just as well as you do. The only reason she can't now is because I haven't been around her much. But I can tell you how she feels, Harry."

"You can?" Harry asked.

"Do I even need to tell you? I'm sure you can guess," Estelle said quietly.

"She loves me," Harry said silently.

"Of course she does," Estelle said. "I shouldn't have needed to say so."

"You didn't," Harry said. "We just haven't gotten around to talking about that yet."

"Harry?" Ginny asked, breaking him out of his conversation with Estelle.

"Sorry," Harry apologised. "We were just talking. Come on. Grab Estelle's tail feathers. Estelle, can you take us down near to Hagrid's hut please."

Estelle nodded before flying in front of them. Ginny looked at Harry and he gave her an encouraging smile before they took a hold of her tail feathers and she flamed them down near Hagrid's hut. They appeared amongst some trees and there they waited for a couple of

minutes before they heard the shuffling footsteps of feet that indicated that the other had reached Hagrid's. When they heard a knock on the door Harry and Ginny stepped out from the trees and headed to Hagrid's.

"You sure he won't know anything?" Ginny whispered.

"Positive," Harry said, putting his arm around her. "I wouldn't let anything happen to you, even if something did happen. It won't, but if it did, I wouldn't let anything happen."

"I know," Ginny said, sighing. "I just don't want everyone to hate me."

Harry kissed her on the head just as they reached Hagrid's hut. "They won't Ginny, they won't."

When they reached the front door of Hagrid's cabin, they knocked on the door and Hagrid answered. He let them in and they sat down next to the others.

"Is there any reason the five of yah is down at this time of night?" Hagrid asked them.

"Yes," Harry said. "We're just curious, you see. Well, with what happened with the Chamber of Secrets the first term, us five have been looking into who's the Heir of Slytherin. We thought it was Malfoy at first, so we brewed some Polyjuice Potion and asked him what he knew."

"He didn't know anything. Apart from the fact that the last time it was opened a Muggleborn died. And someone was expelled. So we've been searching for who was expelled," Harry finished.

"You saw my name," Hagrid said.

"Yes," Harry said. "We don't believe it's you," he added hurriedly. "We know you wouldn't attack anyone. We just wondered what you knew about it."

"They got the wrong guy. I would never do that," Hagrid said.

"We know," Harry said. "But we were wondering what you knew."

"Nothing much," Hagrid said tonelessly. "I was caught by a Slytherin. Top of the class, he was. Teachers pet and everything, not that it's a bad thing, Hermione."

"The person who caught you was in Slytherin?" Neville asked.

"Yes," Hagrid said. "Apparently he was searching for the Heir of Slytherin and saw me with, well, I had a pet back then and he caught me with it. So he thought I was the Heir of Slytherin and told the headmaster. The headmaster expelled me. The attacks stopped after that. I guess the Heir of Slytherin got scared that he would be expelled, too. This was all after the death."

"Who died?" Hermione asked.

"A Muggleborn named Myrtle," Hagrid said. "I still believe she haunts the girl's toilette."

"Moaning Myrtle?" Ron said. "She was killed by the Heir of Slytherin?"

"Yes, I believe so," Hagrid said. "Now I've told ya all I know. So can we please change the subject?"

"Does she know who opened the Chamber of Secrets fifty years ago?" Hermione asked.

"I never asked her," Hagrid said. "I don't talk to her, usually. She stays in her bathroom all the time. I was expelled by the headmaster and Myrtle returned as a ghost to follow a poor student around. When the ministry told her to stop, she came back here and live in that bathroom ever since. It's where she died, in that bathroom. So I was expelled, believed I was the one who let the monster lose that killed myrtle. Dumbledore believed I was innocent, though. He believed him. He managed to persuade Headmaster Dippet to keep me on and train me as gamekeeper. Great man, Dumbledore. He became like a father figure to me by then. My dad had past away not too soon before this. I didn't have anyone left."

"Do you have any idea who opened it?" Hermione asked.

"None," Hagrid said.

"What was the name of the boy, Hagrid?" Neville asked. "The Slytherin who caught you?"

"I can't remember his name, really," Hagrid said. "It happened all so fast. One minute I was in Gryffindor and the next, I'd been expelled. I didn't catch his name. Stinking Slytherin. You know I wouldn't be surprised if it was he and who set me up."

"You have no idea?" Ginny asked.

"I'm sorry," Hagrid said. "I try to forget about it all, really."

"What about this time?" Hermione urged.

"I don't have any idea," Hagrid said. "Like I said, I can't remember the name of the boy who caught me. So I wouldn't know if he has a kid here or not." Hermione looked disappointed. "Now, you five need to get back up to the castle! It's close to ten o'clock and I don't want you lot in detention. Harry and Ginny already have detention with the headmaster. I don't want them in trouble anymore than they are."

With a downtrodden group, the five of them trekked up to the common room. Harry and Ginny had the Marauders Map so they managed to navigate their way past any teachers that were out of bed. Once they managed to clamber back into the common room, the five of them sat down by the fire.

"I guess that's it, then." Ron said. "We're at a dead end."

"There's got to be something!" Hermione said.

"What though?" Neville asked. "There's nothing else to go on."

"This Slytherin that set up Hagrid," Hermione said.

"Without a name we can't really do anything," Neville said. "I mean what do we look for? A Slytherin who went to school here fifty years ago. Hagrid didn't even tell us what year this Slytherin was in."

"But I bet you anything this Slytherin was the heir," Hermione said. "That he stepped up Hagrid for his fall."



"I think we all agree on that," Harry said. "With the name we would be at least be able to find out who it was last time. But we can't. We don't have any more leads."

"We have one," Hermione said. "We can speak to Myrtle."

"You heard Hagrid. Dumbledore was teacher here fifty years ago," Harry said. "You don't think he would have talked to her."

"I know," Hermione said. "But that's what you said about Hagrid. If we didn't go speak to him, we wouldn't have known about Myrtle. I get the feeling that you don't want us to find out who the heir of Slytherin is."

"Of course I do!" Harry said. "But we're just chasing loose leads."

"But without solid leads," Ron said, "we can only chase loose ones."

"I just don't think we'll find anything out from her," Harry said.

"It wouldn't hurt to ask," Hermione said. "Would it?"

"I suppose not," Harry muttered.

"Alright, I'm off to bed," Hermione said, yawning. "We'll talk some more in the morning." Slowly Hermione, Ron and Neville stalked off to bed, leaving Harry and Ginny alone.

"I told you they wouldn't find anything out," Harry said as he pulled Ginny in a hug.

"But what about Myrtle," Ginny whispered.

"They're just chasing loose ends," Harry whispered.

"I hope you're right," Ginny said. "I so hope you're right."

A/N: One more chapter for second year to go.

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